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'Plotter' says Sudan falsely accused

WASHINGTON (AP) — The alleged leader of a plot to blow up the United Nations accused federal prosecutors of deliberately creating a false impression of Sudanese government involvement in the Washington Post reported Friday. Siddig Ibrahim Siddig Ali denied in an interview with the Post any involvement in the alleged plot to blow up U.S. headquarters, two Hudson River tunnels and a building that houses offices of the FBI. He said a transcript of a tape recorded meeting he and Emad Salem, an Egyptian who acted as an informer, held with Sudanese officials at the United Nations was taken out of context in news reports. The transcript, quoted by ABC News, appeared to show Mr. Siddig Ali and Mr. Salem enlisting the help of Sudanese officials in obtaining a vehicle to transport explosives to a U.N. garage and to secure a visa for Mr. Salem's escape. The State Department this week placed Sudan on its list of nations that support "terrorism" (see page 18). Mr. Siddig Ali said he knew people at the Sudanese mission and had taken Mr. Salem, who recorded the conversation, to help him obtain a vacation visa.

Jordan Times

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King receives cable from Yeltsin

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Friday received a cable from Russian President Boris Yeltsin congratulating him on the 30th anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations between both countries. President Yeltsin said his government is satisfied with the level of bilateral relations and the close cooperation exerted in the search for peace in the Middle East. The Russian president voiced his confidence that Russia and Jordan will benefit from the "important available resources in both countries to further develop bilateral relations. He wished King Hussein continued good health and happiness and the Jordanian people further progress and prosperity.

Palestinian youth shot in the eye

GAZA CITY, occupied Gaza Strip (AFP) — Troops shot a 15-year-old Palestinian in the eye Friday in clashes following trouble the day before which left eight Palestinians and an Israeli soldier wounded, witnesses said. Soldiers opened fire on protesters in Rafah, where the occupied Gaza Strip borders Egypt, hitting the youth who was taken to Gaza's eye hospital with a serious injury. The clash erupted near where a grenade was lobbed at an army jeep and injured an Israeli soldier on Thursday, according to the army. The soldiers opened fire, wounding four Palestinians, witnesses said. Troops also shot three demonstrators in Gaza City and one in Nasserat on Thursday.

Comoros seeks to join Arab League

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Comoros, a tiny island in the Indian Ocean, has applied to join the Arab League, Al Itihad daily reported Friday. Arab foreign ministers will discuss the request when they meet in September, the semi-official paper said, quoting informed sources at the Cairo-based league. "The Arab League secretariat has completed a series of studies on the political, legal, historical and cultural aspects of Comoros as well as its Arab and Islamic affiliations," it said. The league, created in 1942, groups 20 Arab countries and the Palestine Liberation Organisation. The three islands of Comoros, with an area of 2,950 square kilometres had been controlled by Muslim sultans until the French acquired them in 1841. The country declared independence in a referendum in 1975.

Syria: Israel killing chances of peace

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria said Friday that Israeli settlers who set up seven mobile homes on the Golan Heights were threatening the Middle East peace talks. The official newspaper Al Thawra said the action could mean "pushing to failure the coming round of the Middle East peace talks in Washington." "While Israel is deliberately working to kill the chances of peace and is stripping the peace process of the means of success, its aim beyond that is to prevent the coming round of talks from making progress and to doom its conclusions to failure," Al Thawra said. Witnesses said Wednesday that Jewish settlers had set up seven mobile homes on the Golan Heights. They said the settlers planned to declare a new settlement soon.

Udai reelected head of journalists

NICOSIA (AP) — Saddam Hussein's eldest son, Udai, on Friday was unanimously reelected leader of the Iraqi Journalists' Association, the Iraqi News Agency reported. Udai Hussein received all 1,122 votes at an association meeting which he had summoned. IJA said in a dispatch monitored in Nicosia. The meeting was held under the slogan, "Democracy: A Source of Power for the Individual and Society," IJA said. Udai Hussein, 29, runs the Babel newspaper, which has been unparalleled in its criticism of his father's government. The father-son relationship has been rocky at times, although Udai's star has been rising of late.

Hizbollah warns Israel against Lebanon raids

Rabin says attacks that killed nine Israeli soldiers not a truce violation

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Resistance fighters vowed Friday to fire fresh salvoes of Katyusha rockets into Israel if it harmed civilians in South Lebanon to avenge the killing of nine Israeli soldiers by guerrillas. The new threat was issued after civilian fears subsided of a huge Israeli retaliatory blitz similar to last month's assault on the south. Most people stayed put in their home towns and villages although hundreds took refuge with relatives and friends in safer areas. An Israeli army spokesman said a 22-year-old Israeli lieutenant died of injuries sustained in Thursday's bombings, raising the death toll from Thursday's attacks to nine. That was the highest one-day death toll since Israel carved out its self-styled "security zone" in South Lebanon in 1985. The two guerrilla attacks, in the morning and at sundown, were claimed by Hizbollah. In the first attack, Lebanese sources said three bomb explosions hit a 15-member Israeli army foot patrol near the village of Shihbeen.

Jihad claims attack on Alfi

CAIRO (Agencies) — Muslim militants who almost killed Egypt's interior minister in a bomb attack Wednesday targeted other ministers and top religious figures, security sources said on Friday. They said militants now on trial in a military court were linked to one of the attacks and had stalked out the homes and movements of prominent figures before their arrest. Their targets included Religious Affairs Minister Mohammad Mahjoub, the sheikh of Al Azhar University and other public figures, the security sources said. Wednesday's attack, which killed five people and wounded 15 including Interior Minister Hassan Al Alfi, was the militants' fourth major assassination attempt this year. Security officials said a claim of responsibility by Al Jihad (Holy Struggle) group showed the government now faced at least two militant groups who may be outbidding each other for leadership of the Muslim fundamentalist movement seeking to set up a purist Islamic state in Egypt. "It's like the 1970s. There are different groups, allies and rivals at the same time. Al Jihad want publicity. They will do anything to show they are the strongest group," a senior security official said. Jihad was the group which assassinated President Anwar Sadat in 1981.

Israel responded with air strikes in hills surrounding East Lebanon's ancient city of Baalbek and the village of Janta in the eastern Bekaa Valley near the Syrian border. Two guerrillas were killed, according to Hizbollah. After the air raid, two more bombs were detonated by remote control Thursday evening, targeting an Israeli patrol at a ravine about 800 metres from the scene of the earlier explosion. The U.S. State Department condemned the Hizbollah attacks, saying they were "yet another calculated attempt by extremists to derail the peace process." After Israel's offensive last month, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher brokered a cease-fire that halted the Israeli attacks. "This violent act is yet another calculated attempt by extremists to derail the peace process, just as preparations are underway to resume negotiations in Washington," the U.S. statement said. It urged all parties "to do everything in their power to prevent such violent acts from diverting them from the pursuit of a negotiated settlement of their differences and achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the region."

"If the enemy resumes hitting civilians Katyusha rockets will be fired against it again," Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah said in a Friday's prayer sermon at a Beirut mosque. "We have said that we are against bombing (Israeli) civilians but if they want to kill our civilians they should know that we will not be the only ones to suffer."

"He who seeks to kill us, we will seek to kill him," said Sheikh Fadlallah. It was the most direct threat to resume Katyusha attacks made by a top Hizbollah leader since U.S.-mediated ceasefire "understandings" ended the seven-day Israeli bombardment of the south last month. Under the ceasefire, the pro-Iranian Hizbollah (Party of God) stopped firing Katyusha rockets into northern Israel. Security sources in the south (Continued on page 10)



A group of Palestinian fighters in 'Alin Al Hilweh refugee camp seen during a military meeting to prepare an operation against Israelis in South Lebanon (AFP photo)

King: Electoral change necessity, other amendments in due time

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein has said that the introduction of one-person, one-vote system into the Election Law was necessary at this stage and that other amendments will follow it and when necessity dictates. The recent measures concerning the Election Law were adopted after a lengthy debate that involved all points of views and at all levels," the King said in a meeting with journalists at the Royal Court. "We have found circumstances ripe (for such a move to give the chance) for all to exercise their rights to elect the next Parliament on equal footing." The King added that this amendment might not be the perfect thing to have but other changes might be introduced in the future to go hand in hand with developments. "We might find it necessary to

introduce another temporary law at a later stage because we are developing with the reality we are living in," the King said. "And to say that everything is one hundred per cent correct is untrue. But we always yearn to achieve the best." The King said that the amendment was only a very minor one introduced at this stage to rectify a defect discovered in the past. He said that other issues, such as giving the right to vote for Jordanian citizens outside the country and Jordanian Armed Forces, have not been tackled at present but might be addressed in the future. "There are some loopholes (in the law) that have to be overcome, and we will continue to introduce ameliorations in the coming stages," he said pointing out that more discussion, cooperation and organisation were needed "which might take four, eight or even 12 years to achieve. But this is the way we chose and will maintain with the cooperation of everyone."

The King emphasised Jordan's commitment to its Constitution and National Charter and will to safeguard democracy and pluralism. He warned against any attempt to abort the democratisation process. "We are sincerely and honestly keen on promoting democracy, pluralism and respect of human rights," His Majesty said. "It seems to me that there are some who did not want this experience succeed and achieve its expected objectives and goals."

The King said in an answer to journalists' questions that "we must not live in a lie of unanimous approval on supporting policies. We are human beings and everyone has his/her own

Bosnia talks adjourn with draft map

GENEVA (AFP) — International mediators presented Bosnia's warring factions with a draft peace accord Friday including a proposed map for the country's ethnic division in hopes of ending the bitter 17-month Bosnian conflict. But the Bosnian government delegation of President Alija Izetbegovic, promising to submit the plan to the Bosnian parliament, said it was "not satisfied" as "the Serbs will not give up ethnically-cleanse territories which were taken by force." The Bosnian Serb and Croat leaders, Radovan Karadzic and Mate Boban, also predicted a tough fight to get the package accepted by their self-styled parliaments. John Mills, spokesman for the year-old Geneva negotiations, announced that the peace talks were adjourning and would resume on Aug. 30 for what he called a "final meeting" here. Mr. Mills said the package in-

cluded documents on constitutional and other issues already worked out and a map for the division of Bosnia into three ethnic republics "reflecting the discussions that have taken place." Conference co-chairman Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg, urging all sides to show greater flexibility in efforts to nail down a settlement, first met alone Friday with Mr. Izetbegovic, who has been skeptical of chances for an early settlement. European Community (EC) envoy Lord Owen said earlier there had been "substantial movement" on the map after agreements on constitutional principles, military arrangements, and temporary U.N. administration of Sarajevo. The mediator said the Serbs and the Croats had made "important concessions" on the future status of central Bosnia that have "gone some way" towards resolving the problems in that area. He also said the Bosnians had won guarantees of access to the Sava River in the north and Adriatic Sea in the south to avoid becoming a landlocked state at the mercy of their enemies. But Lord Owen said the main problem was the amount of territory to be accorded the three parties. The Serbs currently control 70 per cent of the former Yugoslav republic, the Croats about 20 per cent and the Bosnians 10 per cent. The Muslims accounted for 44 per cent of Bosnia's pre-war population and Mr. Izetbegovic is seeking 43 per cent of the land while the original Serbo-Croat partition plan would give them less than a third. Mr. Karadzic said the agreement gave at least 30 per cent of an ethnically divided Bosnia to the Muslim-led government. "It is a painful compromise, but this compromise may bring an end to the war," he told reporters as he left U.N. headquarters.

New givens herald fresh strategies for Parliament hopefuls

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The introduction of a one-person, one-vote formula to the election process has confused the campaign plans of some political parties and is likely to produce unexpected winners in the Nov. 8 legislative elections, observers and commentators say. The new temporary election law will require political parties and groups to consolidate efforts in order to ensure their candidates receive the highest number of votes at the polls in November. Analysts and observers believe that political parties on the right, left or centre of the political spectrum will have to, first, consolidate efforts in each district in order to get one candidate from their political spectrum elected; and, second, to consider tribal and sectarian voting elements in each district before choosing their candidates; and, third, to consider having intra-party or coalition primaries in order to reduce the number of candidates vying for each seat. "The one-person, one vote

formula will strengthen those candidates with popular base and those to whom tribal support is assured," said one leftist commentator after the new election law was made public last Tuesday. "This tribal support can also be forthcoming in terms of regional origin — it is not restricted to tribes as such," added the leftist commentator referring to popular support accorded to Palestinian candidates in areas like the First, Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth districts in Amman Governorate. "The 'Palestinian issue' is big in areas such as the Third District of Amman in which either Jordanians of prominent West Bank origin or Jordanians with a historical involvement in the Palestine cause are more likely to get votes than elsewhere will be elected," said the leftist commentator. With the one-person, one-vote formula, however, votes would be split among what are expected to be up to some 20 candidates per legislative seat. Some political observers believe that even in traditionally

liberal voting areas, tribal or regional orientation could define the outcome of the elections rather than political programmes or platforms. "Traditionally the first priority of any voter goes to the family, tribe, fellow-townfolk and the like; the second vote goes to the political programme, party and so forth," explained a minister in the current government. "The first vote in the up-coming elections will be the only vote," he added referring to the one vote allocated to each voter. Fearing that tribal or clan-voting patterns will dominate the voting trend in all of Jordan's 20-voting districts, political observers believe that political parties and coalitions will have to discipline their members and field their strongest candidate in each district and prevent any rival candidate, who may belong to the same political group and social-regional clan, to hold off their candidacy until another election if they hope to assure themselves of seats in Parliament. "There are seven registered

leftist parties in Jordan," said a member of the Jordanian Arab National Democratic Alliance (JANDA), an umbrella group for leftist and pan-Arab parties, and individuals. "Together with the three pan-Arab parties, they could form a coalition and field one strong candidate in each district and probably win," said one of the founding members of JANDA, the governor of Amman, Mamdouh Al Abbadi. But the lack of unity among political parties in general and the left and pan-Arab parties in particular is likely to make this an unlikely scenario. In the last elections, pan-Arab, liberal and leftist candidates won some 12 seats in the Lower House. Political observers close to the JANDA coalition say that unless the leftists and pan-Arab groups unite and come up with one combined list of candidates, they may lose seats in Parliament rather than gain seats. While aware of the likelihood that a change in the Election Law was imminent, most of the political parties on the left of the political scale

had not prepared an alternative election strategy in the event that the only change to the Election Law be the one-person, one-vote formula. Although this limited change had been widely speculated about and expected, the leftist parties, joined by some of the pan-Arab parties, will formulate a new strategy this week pending the legal attempts by seven of these parties to protest and challenge the government's decision to opt for limited change in the Election Law. Meanwhile, the Islamists, in particular the Islamic Action Front, continued to express opposition to the change. IAF insiders say that the most likely campaign strategy of the Islamists will be to choose the most likely and popular candidate in each district of the Kingdom and field him. "We are going to field at least one candidate in each district and two or more in a number of limited districts in Amman as well as Balqa, Irbid and Zarqa," said a spokesman for the IAF on Friday.

While the on-going debate in the Muslim Brotherhood movement and IAF continues on what to do about the change in the Election Law, most insiders believe that beyond written protests neither the IAF nor the other parties who objected a limited change in the law will take any action to protest the change. The centrist and right-wing parties, which, along with one Islamist party, the Arab Democratic Islamic Movement (Dua'a), showed the least overall opposition to the limited change in the Election Law, are likely to retain the predominantly traditional and clan/tribal orientation of the last parliament, political observers believe. "These parties are tribal and clan based as it is and thus even if they don't increase the number of seats formerly held by deputies who advocate such political currents they are unlikely to decrease in number. At least 25 traditional, centrist and right of centre politicians held seats in the last parliament. Secretary General of the AI

Provisions reach stranded Chinese ship

BAHRAIN (AP) — A Chinese ship said to be carrying chemical weapons ingredients for Iran received fresh food and water Friday, weeks after it was denied permission to enter the Gulf of Oman, off Fujairah, since Sunday. It was denied permission Aug. 3 to pass through the Strait of Hormuz on its way to Dubai. Dubai said it would not allow the ship to dock, after the United States warned that the vessel was carrying lethal chemical additives which would be unloaded at the emirate and shipped to Iran. Washington has said the ship would be allowed to proceed only after Beijing allows to have it searched. China has denied that the ship is carrying chemical weapons ingredients. In a ship-to-shore telephone contact, the Yinhe's crew said provisions were being unloaded onto their ship as a U.S. military helicopter circled overhead. Speaking in broken English, they identified the vessel bringing the provisions as Gasship-5. That vessel's provenance could not be traced. But the Yinhe's local agents are based in Dubai. The 19,237-tonne ship is being shadowed by the USS Ingraham. The Yinhe's captain, Rude Chang, said the U.S. ship was five kilometres from his vessel.

Crown Prince in Turkey

ANKARA (Agencies) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan arrived in Turkey on Friday for talks with President Suleyman Demirel and Prime Minister Tansu Ciller. The Crown Prince, who is accompanied by Her Royal Highness Princess Sayrah, will discuss Arab-Turkish, Jordanian-Turkish relations and other issues of common concern, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said. A Royal Court announcement said the Crown Prince would be holding meetings with President Demirel and Prime Minister Ciller. The talks will be held within the international and Islamic framework and will also cover matters related to the general situation in the Middle East. His Majesty King Hussein visited Turkey earlier this month following a visit to Amman by Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin in July. In comments to Turkish reporters Friday, the Crown Prince said: "His Majesty was very recently in Ankara. Prior to that we received the Turkish foreign minister in Amman and we are happy to see close coordination between Turkey and Jordan on foreign policy issues, both in the ongoing attempts to revive the Arab-Israeli peace process, our shared concerns for the issues of the hour and in particular the question of the refugees."

"The Azeri refugees crossing the border which is a subject of deep concern in Jordan, the country which has hosted refugees from other conflicts, most notably and recently over 400 refugees from Bosnia and which shares with Turkey deep concern for developments in this West Asian and East Mediterranean region."

In reply to a question on whether he was carrying any messages from King Hussein, he said: "Basically there was an agreement during the foreign minister's meeting in Amman to establish or revive the Turkish-Jordanian joint commission, and it is our hope that during our discussions we will take this step further." In reply to a question on Iraq, he said: "Clearly we are both countries that are neighbour to Iraq and directly affected by developments both in Iraq and as a result of the outflow of the Gulf war and the movement of demography which is of concern to us both, and indeed the question of sanctions." Prince Hassan met with Ms. Ciller and conveyed to her the greetings of King Hussein. Prince Hassan and Mr. Demirel discussed bilateral relations, regional and international developments, the Middle East peace process, the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the suffering of the Iraqi people.

Palestinian institutions suffer as coffers dry up

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) huge network of social, financial and military operations is falling apart amid a crippling financial crisis.

Trained fighters are working as butchers' boys, experienced officials are scraping a living working in restaurants and laundries, and tens of thousands of Palestinians accustomed to receiving many of the benefits provided by a real state from the PLO are finding their only source of livelihood cut off.

The financial crisis was precipitated by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's support for Iraq after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait, which promoted the oil-rich Gulf Arab states to withdraw funding to the PLO, estimated by the United Nations to have run into hundreds of millions of dollars a year.

Tens of thousands of Palestinians with well-paid jobs were thrown out of Kuwait in the aftermath of the emirate's liberation by a U.S.-led multinational force in 1991, leading to a further drying-up of funds.

The results have been devastating. Palestinian "prisoners of war" in Israeli military jails have not received their monthly payment of between \$75 and \$105 for five months.

Many academics, officials and

fighters have not received their salaries from the PLO for months.

PLO representation across the world has been cut back, and personnel at the head office in Tunis has been slashed. Two high schools run by the organisation have been closed down in Lebanon, home to 350,000 Palestinians, and where the Palestinian Red Crescent medical service has been paralysed for a year.

Families stormed a U.N. food store in a refugee camp in Lebanon two weeks ago and made off with sacks of flour and sugar.

But the most serious effect is in the Israeli-occupied territories of the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and East Jerusalem, where, according to estimates by Palestinian economists, annual funding from the PLO for educational, social, health and political organisations has been cut by between 70 and 80 per cent.

Economists estimate annual PLO funds to the territories of \$300 to \$310 million have dropped to between \$60 and \$90 million dollars.

Many Palestinian analysts see another reason for the Arab states' continued withholding of funds: They want to pressure the PLO into making concessions in the Middle East peace talks.

"Cutting off aid to the Palestinians is aimed at making them

desperate, so they accept whatever solution they can get," said Munir Maqdash, head of the forces in Lebanon of Fatch, the main PLO faction.

In the West Bank and Gaza, the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas is welcoming with open arms the Palestinians' disillusioned with Mr. Arafat's organisation.

Funding for universities in the territories, with their 13,000 students, has all but dried up. According to Palestinian economist Samir Huleileh, the institutions received between \$22 million and \$25 million annually before the Gulf war. Now they get only \$2 million a year.

Lecturers at Bir Zeit, the most prestigious university in the occupied territories, have not been paid for two months.

"The only course of action for the universities is to drastically increase their fees, which will mean 60 per cent of students abandoning their studies," Mr. Huleileh told AFP.

He added that 42,000 families eligible for PLO "social services" risked going broke.

The "people's committees" aiding the infidels are in serious financial difficulty. The committee in Tulikarm, in the north of the West Bank, has had its funds chopped from \$20,000 a month to \$5,000.

Cautious calm returns to war-torn Kabul

By Terence White
Agence France Presse

KABUL — Just the tail-fin was visible, but that was enough for the demolition expert to identify the rocket buried in the Turkish embassy garden as a Russian-made Orugan (Hurricane).

But this fin, the remains of a deadly 600-kilogramme monster which can carry several types of warhead, including high-explosive and white phosphorus incendiaries, had been fired on Kabul not recently but a year ago.

More than 70 civilians were killed or wounded when this one missile exploded in the air near the Ministry of Communications, showering the area with a cluster of 50 small bombs, each the size of a medium mortar round.

Last August, Gulbudin Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Islami faction guerrillas were besieging Kabul, raining rockets and artillery shells in the worst butchery seen in the Afghan capital following the Mujahideen's April 1992 takeover.

That Orugan was just one of those thousands of rockets. A year later, Mr. Hekmatyar is prime minister and Kabul is experiencing a relative if cautious calm, since latent bitter rivalry between the Mujahideen factions erodes any real sense of Afghan national unity.

While the political machinations of Mr. Hekmatyar and his long-term rival, former Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Masoud, are mostly covert, the external manifestations of them are clearly visible in the physical destruction of whole suburbs of south and west Kabul, now mostly empty of inhabitants and as silent as the swollen graveyards scattered among them.

Yet the seeds of promise for a brighter future are being sown in war-weary Kabul.

The significant halt in rocket attacks has emboldened a handful of U.N. experts to return and reactivate suspended projects in Kabul, such as the city's water supply, half of which has been restored in the last two weeks.

Electricity comes in fits and starts, the rocket holes in major roadways are being filled in and resurfaced, and at least three sets of traffic lights blink at the anarchy of Afghan motorists for whom a

simple shopping excursion to the downtown bazaar may be likened to a frenzied cavalry charge.

In strange contrast to radio rhetoric directing women on righteous public dress codes, buses are not yet segregated due to overcrowding. Men and women find themselves packed in with the closest — and otherwise forbidden — physical proximity.

Telecommunications workers have linked Kabul to at least a quarter of the Afghan provinces by telephone, providing calls are made from the general post office, and although international calls from Kabul are still impossible.

Some 2,000 of the 5,000 pre-revolutionary public pay-phones are still working, at an equivalent price of one U.S. cent for seven calls of unlimited duration.

But some items seem ridiculously over-priced. A simple set of 10 kilogramme dumb-bells made from melted-down war scrap cost the body-building enthusiasts the same as a foreigner pays the famed chicken street traders for a hand-crafted antique knife of exquisite workmanship.

Kabul University plans to reopen before the end of August, and a month ago some primary schools were activated, although classes are held under the trees because all classrooms are filled with displaced families.

"We will vacate the school when our homes are rebuilt and security is restored," one woman squatter said.

Uniformed garrison forces have replaced guards on north-side city intersections, but in the south and west of the capital, Mujahideen of Hezb-e-Islami and their Shiite Muslim allies Hezb-i-Wahdat dominate, where they continue to duel with Defence Ministry forces.

Food and fuel convoys, while starting to trickle through to Kabul from Pakistan, have yet to have a significant effect on food prices in the bazaar, which remain high.

"We are only thinking about how to get our bread — not what the leaders are doing," said one shop-keeper.

Of course we are hoping for long-term peace, but in the meantime survival is our main concern," he said.

GAO says building U.S. tanks in Egypt costlier by millions

WASHINGTON (AP) — Several years and more than a billion dollars could have been saved if the United States had produced tanks for Egypt in America instead of financing a sprawling Egyptian tank factory, according to a report to Congress.

Nine years after President Ronald Reagan's administration agreed to start the arrangement, the factory near Cairo is largely unused and overhead costs are heavy, said the General Accounting Office (GAO).

Production started in 1991 and only about 75 have been completed of a planned delivery of 524 M1A1 tanks for the Egyptian army, it said.

The report was released Thursday by Democratic Representative David Obey, chairman of the subcommittee on foreign operations in the appropriations committee of the House of Representatives.

Mr. Obey and others on his panel have been saying that Israel and Egypt, the top two recipients of U.S. foreign aid at levels unchanged for a decade, eventually must export cuts.

The report said the State Department agreed mainly for political reasons to "co-production" of tanks with Egypt, "an important Middle East ally." Department officials "were convinced that Egypt would not accept complete U.S.-built tanks as a substitute so they never considered that option seriously."

Financing began in 1984 with a \$150 million contract for the U.S. General Dynamics Corporation to design and provide other basics for the tank factory.

"If the United States had not provided the initial funding for factory design and construction oversight, (it) would have been in a better position to resist an Egyptian request for co-production," the report said. Co-production meant joint manufacture of tanks with most of them assembled in the Egyptian facility with Egyptian workers, the report said.



Hizbollah fighters mourning Friday in Baslebek, a village in the Bekaa Valley, two of their comrades killed Thursday by raids of Israeli (AFP photo)

Guerrillas, Israelis wage electronic war in Lebanon

By Ed Blanche
The Associated Press

NICOSIA — Iranian-backed guerrillas and Israeli soldiers are fighting a deadly electronic war in the desolate panhandle of South Lebanon, with both sides constantly outwitting the other to gain a temporary advantage.

The nine soldiers the Israelis admit were killed Thursday in an ambush in the Israeli-occupied "security zone" along the border were victims of the guerrillas' increasingly sophisticated electronic bombs and tactics.

This has added a new dimension to the violence that has torn the flashpoint region in the Arab-Israeli conflict for more than two decades.

South Lebanon regularly explodes into senuous fighting. Last month guerrillas unleashed broadsides of Katyusha rockets, while the Israelis responded with air strikes using "smart bombs" and missiles.

But most deaths in this vicious little war come from the unremitting conflict on the ground between 700 or so hardcore guerrillas, funded and armed by Tehran, and the 1,500 Israeli troops patrolling the "security zone" with their 2,500-strong militia allies of the South Lebanon Army (SLA).

The Israelis, with their state-of-the-art weaponry, high-tech systems and intense military training, have long held the technological edge over their Arab foes.

But for the first time, they are facing highly motivated guerrillas who are steadily acquiring technical expertise.

Around 75 per cent of Hizbollah's attacks over the last 18 months used remote-controlled roadside bombs in the "security zone."

Israel occupied the 1,100-square-kilometre zone in Lebanon — the only hot combat zone in the Arab-Israeli conflict — in 1985 as a buffer against attacks on its northern settlements.

To thwart Hizbollah and other raiders, the Israelis fly round-the-clock surveillance missions using small remote-

controlled mastiff drones with high-resolution TV cameras over South Lebanon.

The drones' 22-horsepower motors make them virtually silent and they normally fly at around 4,180 metres so they cannot be seen from the ground. Their fiberglass construction makes them invisible to radar.

They transmit real-time video pictures to Israeli military command posts and can eavesdrop on telephone conversations.

The Israelis' hiltop firebases, and the ravines and wadis used by infiltrators, are studied with listening devices and sensors that can detect human body heat from hundreds of metres away. But the guerrillas still get through.

The Israelis, employing tactics developed in the 1970s by British troops fighting the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in Northern Ireland, began countering the Hizbollah bombers by locating the frequencies they used to detonate their bombs, then transmitting on those frequencies to blow up the charges prematurely.

Security sources said this had some initial success, and at least six guerrillas were killed in two incidents last year when bombs they were preparing were detonated by Israeli transmissions.

After the guerrillas figured out what was happening, they went back to using bombs detonated manually through command wires by men hiding within sight of the ambush site.

But these kind of bombs are easier to detect because the wires can be spotted.

Hizbollah realised that their men needed sophisticated equipment such as receivers to monitor the Israeli transmissions, recording equipment to tape Israeli frequencies, computers to analyse the data and computer-controlled transmitters to detonate the bombs.

The sources said Iran provided Hizbollah with military experts and the equipment to develop a new coded remote-

control system, which was first detected last summer.

It involved fitting bombs with "at least two receivers with scramblers" which meant the Israelis could not reproduce the detonation frequencies, one source explained.

But after two months, the Israelis managed to penetrate that system and detonated a roadside bomb prematurely after it was planted, although without Hizbollah casualties.

Hizbollah responded by fitting their bombs with small jammers which blocked the Israeli transmissions.

"These bombs were detonated by computerised multi-frequency transmission systems operated by guerrillas keeping their target in sight," one source said.

Hizbollah's move into electronic warfare underlines the movement's growing sophistication.

No longer do the bearded guerrillas wearing green headbands with Koranic slogans strut around the southern villages in plain view. They learned that such high-profile antics made them easy targets for the Israelis.

Stealth is now their watchword. Even so, Israeli intelligence often locate buildings used by Hizbollah commanders which are hit by helicopter gunships and fighter-bombers in a never-ending effort to decapitate the movement.

Until a couple of years ago, Hizbollah would attack Israeli or SLA positions with as many as 50 fighters in suicidal frontal assaults that gained little at a high human cost.

Now, they mainly operate in small groups and have learned new tricks.

For instance, instead of just planting a bomb to hit an Israeli patrol, they plant a small charge that is detonated when a truck-borne patrol passes.

Then, as the Israelis pile out of their vehicle to take cover, a second, larger bomb, often seeded with metal pellets or nails, is detonated as the soldiers are caught in the open.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Kuwait imposes 'permit' for foreign press

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Foreign journalists reporting from Kuwait must now obtain a permit from the government ahead of their assignment, according to a decree from Information Minister, Saud Nasser Al Sabah. Foreign news agency correspondents, newspaper reporters as well as television and radio network journalists must first obtain permission from the Ministry of Information and promise to respect the code of professional ethics, the decree said. Representatives of official press agencies in Kuwait will, for their part, need authorisation from the Foreign Ministry before setting up shop here. "Every press agency wishing to obtain a permit must respect the customs and traditions of Kuwaiti society, the press code and Kuwaiti regulations... otherwise the permit will be revoked and its holder may be pursued by justice," the statement said about the two-year, renewable authorisation. Kuwaiti authorities, which had lifted pre-censorship on the print media in Kuwait in January 1992, have repeatedly warned journalists against harming the emirate's national security.

Israel offers to treat 20 Bosnian amputees

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel has offered to treat 20 Bosnian children whose arms or legs have been amputated in the civil war, the health ministry announced. The offer was made a few days ago to the World Health Organisation which has asked member countries to help treat Bosnia's wounded. The amputees must be 17 years or younger and accompanied by a family member, the ministry's spokeswoman Rachel Bluestein told AFP, adding that Israel proposed receiving them since it is experienced in treating such cases. The children will be admitted to a new pediatric hospital in the Tel Aviv area to receive treatment and undergo the necessary rehabilitative therapy. Representatives from the health and foreign ministries as well as air force officials met Wednesday to discuss the children's evacuation from Bosnia and their reception here. Sunday's evacuation to Britain of 21 wounded and sick Bosnians from Sarajevo, dubbed operation Irma after one of the evacuated children, was strongly criticised by the Bosnian delegation at the peace talks in Geneva, denouncing it as a publicity stunt. In February, Israel took in 83 Bosnian refugees who were put up at a kibbutz (collective village) in the north.

Britain pledges more aid for Sudan

LONDON (AP) — Britain will provide an additional £3.5 million (\$5.25 million) for relief aid in Sudan, the government said Wednesday. Some £1 million (\$1.5 million) is for immediate relief in southern Sudan. The rest will be distributed through voluntary and United Nations organisations, the Overseas Development Administration said.

Former Syrian army chief dies

AMMAN (J.T.) — Assistant Secretary General of the Arab Baath Party Salah Izzeddin Jadid died in Damascus Thursday at the age of 62. Major General Jadid was the chief of staff of the Syrian armed forces from 1962 until 1965 and one of the leaders of the 23rd of February Movement. He was arrested and imprisoned by the Syrian government on Nov. 26 1970, less than two months after Syrian President Hafez Al Assad took office. The late Maj. Gen. Jadid is survived by his wife, three sons and two daughters, according to a report in Al Rai Arabic daily.

Mitsotakis praises 'responsible' Turkish policies

ATHENS (AFP) — Turkey has a "responsible" leadership and does not want to get involved in trouble in the Balkans, Greek Prime Minister Constantinos Mitsotakis said in an interview published Thursday. He told the weekly Oikonomikos Tachydromos that Turkey did "not engage in reckless policy. It knows each time just how far it can go." Turkey was presently in a "very weak" position because of the "terrible problem with the Kurds" amongst other domestic issues, he said. Mr. Mitsotakis also criticised what he called the "trigger-happy" policies of the former Greek socialist government with regard to Turkey. He said that under his government, Greek policy "has changed" in Western Thrace which is home to a large Muslim minority mainly of Turkish origin. There used to be "discrimination, administrative measures against the minority. Now the situation has changed," he said. On Cyprus, Mr. Mitsotakis said the situation on the divided island was "not going well" and he saw no prospect of an early settlement.

Congressmen protest 1,000 Iraqi POW immigrants

MIAMI (AP) — About 1,000 Iraqi prisoners of war (POWs) and their families are quietly being resettled in the United States, say Florida congressmen protesting the move. They are asking President Bill Clinton to "stop this policy of welcoming our former enemies to our home," according to a letter released Thursday by U.S. Rep. Earl Hutto, a Democrat of Florida. Many are bringing dependents with them, and resettlement costs are estimated at \$4,000 to \$7,000 per person, said Mr. Hutto, just back from a tour of the Middle East. "Given the choice, I would much rather see that \$4,000 go to one of our own veterans, and not the people that were shooting at us," said Mr. Hutto's letter. It was also addressed to Attorney General Janet Reno and the Immigration and Naturalisation Service. U.S. Rep. Cliff Stearns, a Florida Republican who also wrote a letter on behalf of the Florida congressional delegation questioning the policy, said the POWs are being routed from camps in Saudi Arabia to California, Michigan, Texas, Tennessee and Illinois as well as Florida. "We are worried about them coming to Florida... why don't they stay in Saudi Arabia?" Mr. Stearns said in an interview. "Basically, it's an insult to veterans everywhere who are not getting their fair share."

Italy blocks arms sale to Mideast, Africa

ROME (AP) — Italian authorities say they have blocked a \$75 million sale of sophisticated weapons bound for two Mideast countries and several in Africa. Italian police arrested four alleged Middlemen — three from former Yugoslavia and an Englishman — shortly after they concluded the contract last Saturday, police said. Marcello Fulvi, director of police anti-terrorism operations, said the arms were partly headed for two Mideast countries "at risk of war" and under "embargo." He declined to elaborate and officials in his office were not immediately available for comment.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

man 34, August 38, Humidity readings: Amman 20 per cent, Aqaba 44 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Mohammad Al Sawwa 732056
Dr. Mohammad Al Nabee 819212
Dr. Jamil Marqah 776149
Dr. Mukhlis Halasa 819220
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Najm pharmacy 637072
Al Salam pharmacy 644945
Yacoub pharmacy 637660
Stomach pharmacy 637660
Najm pharmacy 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Ali Al Amiri 273032
Dr. Aidi Al Amiri (—)
Dr. Youssef Awar 988075
Khalil pharmacy 985417

ZARQA:
Dr. Youssef Awar 988075
Khalil pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Emergency 630341
Fire Brigade 192, 621111, 637777
Police 891228
Blood Bank 77121
Highway Police 843402
Public Security Department 896390
Traffic Police 605800
Water and Sewerage 661176

Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661201
Jordan Television 73111
Radio Jordan 680100
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/22
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn 644281/6
Al-Khal Maternity, J. Amn 644412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 664114
Palestine, Shmiciani 664114
Shmiciani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 645845
Al-Muhsin Hospital 652279
The Islamic, Abdali 65127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 77701/5
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 66111/5
Army, Marfa 6324020
Queen Alia Hospital 664153
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)903560
Ben Sina Hospital (09)98732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)99999

IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
The Al Nafesa Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)5200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:30 Jakarta, Singapore (RJ)
06:30 Dhahran (RJ)
06:30 Cairo, Aqaba (RJ)
06:30 New Delhi (RJ)
06:30 Beirut (RJ)
06:30 Athens, Madrid (RJ)
06:30 Jeddah (RJ)
06:30 Damascus (RJ)
06:30 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
06:30 Larnaca (RJ)
06:30 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
06:30 London, Rome (RJ)
06:30 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
06:30 Paris, Brussels (RJ)
06:30 Madrid, Tunis (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

11:30 Sanaa (YV)
12:30 Rome (AZ)
14:35 Muscat, Doha (GF)
14:35 Larnaca (CY)
14:35 Cairo (MS)
14:45 Dubai, Damascus (EM)
14:45 Larnaca (CY)
14:45 Paris, Damascus (AF)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:30 Beirut (RJ)
07:30 Tunis, Madrid (RJ)
07:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
07:30 Istanbul (RJ)
07:30 Paris, Brussels (RJ)
07:30 Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
07:30 Cairo (RJ)
07:30 London (RJ)
07:30 Athens, Madrid (RJ)
07:30 Jeddah (RJ)
07:30 Damascus (RJ)
07:30 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
07:30 Larnaca (RJ)
07:30 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

07:45 Larnaca (CY)
07:45 Beirut (ME)
12:30 Sanaa (YV)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fits per kg

Apples 300/200
Apricots 400/300
Bananas 600 / 600
Banana (Mukammur) 620 / 620
Beans 520 / 520
Cabbage 100 / 50
Carrot 200/220
Cauliflower 180 / 100
Cherry (red) 750/600
Cucumbers (large) 100 / 50
Cucumbers (small) 170 / 220
Eggplant 100 / 50
Garlic 700 / 500
Grapes 300/200
Lemon 580 / 480
Marrow (large) 150 / 100
Marrow (small) 250 / 250
Mint 50
Onion 650/550
Onion (dry) 140 / 70
Orange 300/200
Peas 300/200
Pepper (hot) 600/300
Pepper (sweet) 300 / 220
Potato 130 / 80
Tomato 200/150
Watermelon 340/80

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:30 Les Aventures de l'Espace
18:30 Envoyé Spécial
19:00 News in French
19:15 Focuse sur
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Wacky World
21:00 Perspectives
21:30 Varieties
22:00 News in English
22:20 Feature Film: "Nowhere to Hide"

PRAYER TIMES

04:36 Fajr
05:59 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
16:17 'Asr
19:19 Maghreb
20:42 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedieh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terrace Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Assiout Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 77261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 652528
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824, 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER



YEMENI VICE PRESIDENT ENDS VISIT: His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Thursday bid farewell to Yemeni Vice President Ali Salem Al Belh who concluded a two-day visit to Jordan. During Mr. Al Belh's visit he met with His Majesty King Hussein to discuss pan-Arab affairs and Yemeni-Jordanian relations. Developments in the Arab-Israeli peace process were also reviewed at the meeting which was attended by Chief of the Royal Court Khaled Al Karaki, other senior court officials, and the Yemeni ambassador to Jordan. King Hussein underlined the importance of dialogue between Arab countries and briefed the Yemeni guest on Jordan's democratic process. Mr. Al Belh agreed with the King's call for inter-Arab dialogue to achieve pan-Arab solidarity (Petra photo)

Crown Prince tells Gulf press Arab action needs revitalisation

By Samir Hiar
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Thursday called for reviving the common Arab action mechanism and referred to a suggestion by the Arab League to pursue such action through a regular meeting of the Arab League Council, scheduled for September.

At a meeting Thursday with representatives of the Gulf press, Prince Hassan dismissed reports of an Arab summit in Morocco. Prince Hassan said, however, that such a summit is urgently needed to discuss an agenda full of concerns and problems.

The Crown Prince also dismissed reports of an imminent visit by His Majesty King Hussein to Saudi Arabia. Jordan is working diligently to bridge the gap in bilateral Jordanian-Saudi relations not because of contemporaneous positions, but a keen desire to safeguard the future of the joint Saudi-Jordanian identity.

Prince Hassan praised the role of the Arab states of the Gulf and Saudi Arabia, especially in supporting the Arab-Israeli peace process and the Arab countries involved in it.

He called for intensifying Arab coordination to come up with a unified Arab perception of the future of the region.

Prince Hassan also called for inter-Jordanian press meeting and another Jordanian-Arab press meeting to discuss the Gulf crisis.

The Crown Prince stressed the importance of inter-Arab coordination and cooperation in serving Arab issues and interests, and noted that 80 per cent of the refugees in the world are Muslims.



He also underlined the importance of utilising past successful bilateral experiences.

On the peace process, Prince Hassan said features of the present phase of the peace process are not yet clear as there is a difference over several issues, including the early delegation of authority and the transitional Palestinian rule.

Regarding the proposed confederation between Jordan and Palestine, Prince Hassan said it is difficult to talk about confederation or federation before securing self-determination for Palestinians. But that does not stop Jordan from looking for formats on the issue, because the Kingdom continues to support the

Majali highlights some results of Gulf crisis

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein has taken the decisive decision to change the parliamentary Election Law after giving those concerned the chance to express their views on the issue, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali said.

In a lecture delivered at the Regency Hotel Wednesday to the American Universities Alumni Club, Dr. Majali said the issue has consumed a great deal of effort and time and thousands of papers before it was settled by the King.

After being familiarised with the various views, it became apparent that the democratisation process needs more than one amendment before Jordan can reach the aspired stage of maturity, he said.

"Now that the issue has been settled, true citizenship requires from us, out of our rights and duties, to participate in the election, either as candidates or voters, with our utmost awareness, wisdom and integrity," the prime minister added.

Dr. Majali said in his lecture, which focused on current issues, education and investment in human resources, that democracy was not a theoretical and philosophical model, but a practice — a building established on solid ground, strong basis, with its bricks placed one by one, in accordance with a flexible plan that takes into consideration the real situation without doing injustice to the basic aspects.

Jordan, he said, was destined to face more changes.

"To remind you, the geography and demography of Jordan have changed several times since it was established in 1921, and with every change we had to re-arrange our plans, re-adjust our march and review our priorities to be able to face emergencies and developments," the Premier said.

He added that Jordan now stands on the threshold of sizeable changes, reminding the audience of the changes brought about by the new world order and the sudden collapse of a super power under immense internal and external pressures.

When this took place, he commented, Jordan watched the Arab World turn into an early scapegoat for this new world order. The Kingdom has always stood for unifying the ranks of the Arab nation and overcoming disputes, but its calls were lost in the midst of the turmoil and the events took their turn and Jordan found itself moving against the current on its own, Dr. Majali said.

"Nevertheless, we managed, in spite of the economic crisis facing us, to stand the big challenge, thanks to the cohesion between the leadership and the people and vice versa, and thanks to the people's confidence in God and themselves, and to the awareness, the education and culture of our society," he said.

The new world order, said Dr. Majali, has placed a serious challenge before the Arab order, and the Arab League Charter was unable to rise to the level of these challenges, and many of the Arab League's weaknesses were revealed by the developments witnessed in the Arab and world arenas.

Nevertheless, Dr. Majali said the Gulf crisis provided an opportunity to rebuild an Arab order on a new basis.

Majali pledges to address RJ problems; privatisation study contract finalised

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali has affirmed that the government is determined to resolve the problems facing the national carrier, Royal Jordanian (RJ), and instructed the airline and the concerned ministries to launch a close dialogue on the proposed privatisation of the airline, sources said Friday.

Dr. Majali, accompanied by the ministers of Finance, Planning, Energy and Mineral Resources as well as the chairman of the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ), held an intense round of talks with senior RJ officials headed by President and Chief Executive Officer Mahmoud Balaq Thursday and expressed his desire and determination "to resolve the airline's problems once and for all," said a senior source.

The pledge, however, did not mean that the government would step in with funds to address the airline's chronic debt problem, but that privatisation moves would be accelerated, said the source.

who spoke on condition of anonymity.

"A review of the RJ operations during 1992 and the first half of 1993 was conducted and this proved the operational viability of the airline," said the source. "But the picture changes when one considers the debt problem."

"Dr. Majali reaffirmed that the government felt that the problem has been lingering for too long, and that the best way to solve the problems of the airline is privatisation and ordered a close dialogue between the concerned ministries and RJ," said the source.

The discussions, which will focus on the various aspects that come into play in the context of privatisation and the present affairs of the airline, will be followed by another high-level encounter of the nature held Thursday, the source said.

Officials estimate the debt of the airline at around JD 250 million. Half of it is owed to government corporations and agencies in Jordan such as the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company, the Housing bank

and the Social Security Corporation, and the rest is owed abroad.

The source noted that Thursday's meeting marked the first time that the government had displayed such a high level of seriousness and resolve to tackle the problem facing the airline.

As evidenced by the performance of RJ in the past years, the airline could make operational profits despite the global recession affecting air travel, but slips heavily into the red when it comes to servicing its debts, accumulated since the 80s.

Officials and airline industry sources say that privatisation is the best means to address the airline's problem. The idea was first floated several years ago, but no concrete moves were taken to pursue it.

As is usual in national privatisation drives, the proposal for RJ has also drawn opposition from within the airline. Several senior officials say they believe that if the airline is helped through its debt crisis, they could put it back on its feet without external support and

privatisation.

The main hurdle in such a course of events is the government's inability to pump in any huge amount into the airline.

Raising the capital of the airline to at least \$100 million from the present JD 22 million (\$33 million) as well as privatisation were recommended by a study conducted by an international firm last year.

Other sources said meanwhile that a government committee had chosen an international consulting company to conduct a complete assessment of options available for privatisation and come up with the best mechanism to implement it.

No further details were available, and the sources declined to name the company which was to be awarded the study among four international firms which were shortlisted after they submitted their offers. Officials said earlier the contract could be worth anywhere between \$250,000 to \$500,000 "depending on the nature of the work that will be entrusted and the extent of consultancy services."

Japan names 3 areas of contribution to Jordan

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Japan, an active participant in the multilateral phase of the Middle East peace process, has identified water desalination, tourism and the Red Sea environment as three distinct areas of contribution to Jordan within a regional context, the Japanese ambassador to Jordan said Friday.

Ambassador Yuji Ikeda said Japanese experts had paid several visits to Jordan to follow up on the implementation of programmes related to the three spheres.

Mr. Ikeda said two sites had been identified as possible siting of pilot projects for water desalination — one in the Jordan Valley and the other near the Dead Sea — but specific details such as cost and other parameters had still to be worked out.

Addressing the water needs of the region's countries and work-

ing out practical programmes acceptable to all the concerned parties is seen as one of the key elements that would guarantee any peace settlement reached in the bilateral track of negotiations involving Israel, Jordan, the Palestinians, Syria and Lebanon.

Syria and Lebanon are staying away from the multilateral negotiations saying it would be a wasted effort until progress is made on the bilateral track, which tackles the core issues of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

In addition to water, the regional talks, spread among five working groups, include regional economic cooperation, arms control, refugees and the environment.

"Japan is concentrating on developing tourism in Jordan in the context of regional economic cooperation," said ambassador Ikeda, limiting his comments on the Japanese role in the peace process to Jordan.

The Japanese assistance to Jordan in tourism will mainly focus on developing tourism sites as well as infrastructure to sustain and upgrade the level of tourism services in Jordan.

Japan, which chairs the multilateral working committee on the environment, has found that the preparedness of Jordan, Egypt and Israel to cope with any "environmental emergency" on the Red Sea was below the desired level, Mr. Ikeda told the Jordan Times.

"It is very important that every country be prepared to cope with an imaginary emergency such as water pollution in the Red Sea," said the ambassador.

The Japanese contribution in this regard will be in helping Jordan to upgrade its handling of solid waste at Aqaba, he said.

The recent flurry of Japanese diplomatic activities in the Middle East as represented in the visits to the region by two senior

officials from the foreign ministry was mainly aimed at familiarising key Japanese diplomats with the perspectives and viewpoints of the concerned countries, ambassador Ikeda said.

He noted that Toshimori Shigie, head of the Middle East and Africa department at the Tokyo foreign ministry, who visited Jordan two weeks ago had assumed his post recently.

Akio Tanaka, director of the first division of the Middle East and Africa department at the Tokyo foreign ministry, visited Jordan immediately after Mr. Shigie's departure.

Mr. Tanaka has been in the post for over one year, Ambassador Ikeda said.

Both officials handle multilateral and bilateral relations at different levels.

During the visits, the officials also discussed Jordanian-Japanese relations in general terms, the ambassador said.

Food production to get boost from Japan

AMMAN (Petra) — The lack of sufficient agricultural equipment is the main reason for the low rate of cereal production in Jordan, a problem that Japan will hopefully help solve, according to a statement released Friday by Agriculture Minister Marwan Kamal.

A visiting Japanese team has been studying ways to help Jordan implement a project for increasing food production; the project will be financed by the Japanese government.

At a meeting Thursday, Dr. Kamal presented an outline of the project to the Japanese team and described the ministry's policies for increasing production of cereals and potatoes and its drive to reclaim arable land.

The lack of proper agricultural roads and materials like fertilisers and pesticides make the increase of cereal production impossible.

Some of the machinery and equipment needed include harvesters to reap lentils and chick peas, of process which today is being done manually, he said.

Ministry sources said the Japanese technical team, which started a visit to Amman on Aug. 17, is currently collecting information and statistics, visiting several agricultural areas in the Jordan Valley, Irbid and Madaba and collecting data on means of boosting potatoes and cereal production in Jordan.

Sources said that the meetings will continue on a daily basis before they sign minutes on Aug. 26 summing up their deliberations and preparing for the implementation of the project.

Nurses to train in U.S. in cancer patient care

AMMAN (Petra) — A group of 19 male and female nurses will travel to Washington D.C. on Tuesday to start a specialised post-graduate training course at Georgetown University on caring for cancer patients.

The announcement was made here Thursday by Abdullah Al Khatib, rapporteur of a national team charged with setting up Al Amal Cancer Centre near the University of Jordan.

Dr. Khatib expressed gratitude for the efforts of Sawan Majali, who holds a Ph.D. in nursing and is a member of the national team. Dr. Majali worked with the Georgetown University administration in preparing for the programme that will train the nurses for a masters degree in cancer patient care.

At a meeting to report on the progress of Al Amal Centre, Dr. Khatib said that Munir Buweis, a Palestinian expatriate doctor living in the U.S. has expressed readiness to contribute to the creation of a paediatric ward caring for children with cancer.

The national team was represented at European conference on aid to hospitals and medical services, held in Amsterdam last

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of oil paintings by Iraqi artists Nashaat and Shawkat Al Akousi at Alia Art Gallery; includes 30 paintings depicting popular life and national scenery in Iraq, as well as Arabic calligraphy.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Jordanian artist Bishara Najjar at Eshbelta Art Gallery, Amra Shopping Centre. The paintings depict Jordanian-Palestinian heritage, Jordanian antiquities, Arab Jerusalem, rural life and natural scenery.
- ★ Exhibition of a new collection of art works by Princess Wijdan Ali at The Gallery, Hotel Jordan Inter-Continental.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by 25 Jordanian artists at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition by Iraqi artists Mohammad Hussein Judi and Shawkat Al Akousi at the Royal Cultural Centre.

JERUSALEM FESTIVAL

- ★ Exhibition of paintings, posters, Palestinian costumes, books and other items on the Holy City of Jerusalem at the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation.
- ★ Exhibition of books on various subjects at Al Hashimieh Plaza, downtown Amman.
- ★ Concert by Lebanese singer Julia Boutros at the Roman Amphitheatre, downtown Amman, at 8 p.m.
- ★ Lecture, in Arabic, by Lebanese singer Julia Boutros on the goals of the artistic movement at 6:30 p.m. at the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation.



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Jordan Times

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Education and democracy

TODAY MARKS the beginning of the new scholastic year for the primary and secondary levels of education. This new start in the process of education in Jordan provides yet another opportunity to assess the relationship between a proper education system and the process of democratisation. Lately, there has been a great deal of debate and deliberations on the principle of one-person, one-vote formula, as if the perfection of the existing legislation governing elections in the country were all that it takes to put the Jordanian experiment in democracy on the right track. Little or no attention has been given to other facets of public life, including the kind of education that still nurtures our younger generation and the future voters in the Kingdom and moulds their thinking.

The commencement of this school year should therefore be yet another reminder that more relevant than amending current laws with a view to making elections more democratic is how Jordanian citizens are being prepared for the big day when they cast their votes intelligently and effectively. There is no better way to channel the attention of the nation towards education and its dynamic role in the new democratic style of government than by engaging our educators in a thorough dialogue at the highest possible level too.

When His Majesty King Hussein takes members of the mass media to task on the future development of democracy in Jordan, as he in fact did on Thursday, education-minded people have a right to suggest that an equal opportunity be afforded to Jordanian educators at every level of education in order to further extend the multi-dimensional approach to democracy. Given the fact that there is a growing consensus that our present educational system leaves much to be desired, one wonders why our interest in fostering a more progressive educational system appears to be slackening, especially when our concerns about democracy cannot be complete without paying due attention to our schools and institutions of higher education.

Jordanians should be expected to learn the ABC of democracy in schools. That is why other nations in the world with strong roots in democracy have introduced civil training even in elementary education. Even more critical than formal education is the introduction of a democratic style of education at the earliest possible class level. In this context, higher education is just as neglected as pre-university education. This means that teachers and professors need to be targeted not in terms of policing them but rather in terms of redirecting their orientation and perspective in order to better suit the new Jordanian democracy.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

ONE CAN say that the countdown to the parliamentary elections has already started and those who were awaiting a decision concerning the Election Law can now embark on their programmes, preparing for the election, said Al Rai daily. The paper said the coming elections are bound to be fair and free as a voter can only choose one candidate, a process which is deemed fair for all constituencies. The hopeful candidates are expected to show enthusiasm in their election campaign and the people of Jordan are expected to turn out in great numbers to cast ballot, predicted the paper. This is rather expected, said the paper, since the registration process witnessed great keenness on the part of the people to participate in this democratic practice which indicates that all voters are keen on making the Jordanian democratic march a real success. But success, said the paper, requires efforts on the part of all parties — voters and candidates — and there is need for voters to carefully study the situation before choosing the people who could best represent the public interest. Indeed, added the paper, the success of the coming elections will not be a success for the candidates who win the seats in Parliament, but a success for the Jordanian people and their democracy.

A COMMUNIST in Al Dastour daily focused attention on King Hussein's call on the Jordanian people to prepare themselves for two great projects: democracy in their country and the attainment of the objectives of the Great Arab Revolt. Saleh Qallab said that by enhancing the democratic principles in Jordan we are setting a good example for other Arab states which have suffered a great deal, lately due to the lack of democratic rule. The writer said that there can be no real Arab unity without democracy and without every Arab feeling that he or she has real interests in that unity. He said the Arab World had witnessed bitter experiences in its attempt to forge unity and all these attempts for unity had failed simply due to lack of democratic rule. The Arabs at present are divided and their domestic affairs are in total disarray and this situation calls for a real new Arab revolution, a revolution designed to build and not to destroy, said the writer. He said that for such a revolution to succeed and achieve the aspired unity, the revolution would first need democracy as without it the revolution would fail because it would be a military dictatorship.

Jordanian Perspective

Teething troubles of democracy

THE SCENARIO that unfolded on the Jordanian political arena in the wake of the realisation that the much-heralded one-person, one-vote system is here to stay is very interesting. Not that the realisation was stunning, since the writing was on the wall since early 1990. But the timing of the formalisation of the move and the developments that preceded and succeeded it and continue to manifest themselves are the factors that could do with a closer look.

The first and foremost question that appears to hang in the air is: Will the Nov. 8 elections be boycotted by some of the groups which have threatened to do so if the 1986 Election Law were amended outside Parliament?

And, obviously, the follow-up question is: If indeed there is to be a boycott, how is it going to affect the democratic process under way in Jordan?

In my reading, one does not have to look too far around for the answers since they are already here.

It is highly unlikely that any political group will boycott the elections. Of course, it cannot be ruled out that some of the parties whose ranks include well-known names and ex-deputies might do it just for the heck of it. It will be a political message as well as a warning or unwitting effort to raise question marks on the legitimacy of the polls in the international eye. But, in practical terms, the voter would still find the same candidates who might have run on the party ticket going "independent" and very much in the race, come the day when nomination closes.

Those who might drop out between now and the closing of the nomination period would be doing so for their own reasons which have less to do with a principled, political stand against what the opposition describes as an unconstitutional move by the government than with personal convictions that they stand little chance of making it to the legislature if it were left to the voters exercising their valuable single vote.

The simple reason for the conviction that there will not be any boycott worth the name in November is the clear indications on the political scene that it has sunk in among Jordanian political circles that those who opt to stay out will stay out and it would be no one's loss but their own.

Again, if there is not going to be any boycott, then the follow-up question does not arise at all.

In the meantime, all the brouhaha that we hear — of condemnations, criticism and loud protestations and threats of legal action — is the workings of a society trying to adapt itself to the trimmings of democracy as well as the strings attached to the system of "of people, for the people, and by the people" in the Third World.

That does not mean that issue is settled and sealed, or the politicians who are crying foul will call it a day and turn their

energies into electioneering. On the contrary, there are enough politically skilled individuals in our society who appreciate the aura of free publicity that would accompany a formalised legal challenge to the amendment to the Election Law.

It might even suit many aspirants to the domed parliament house to spend some of their election funds on lawsuits rather than on advertisements, posters and banners. It is not the sole prerogative of ex-members of Parliament to go to court and challenge the legality of the amendment to the law. After all, isn't it how democracy-based politics works in many countries?

What will be interesting to see here will be how many would try to get aboard the legal challenge bandwagon and whether those who have already staked a claim to a seat to free publicity will allow others to climb up.

There could be hundreds of arguments and counter-arguments of the timing and the constitutionality of the electoral change, and whether a one-person, one-vote formula on its own is compatible with the givens of the Jordanian electorate, tribal affiliations and minority reservations and political considerations. But it has to be understood that Jordan had to start somewhere in amending its electoral process, and the amendment to the Election Law could be that first step in this direction.

However, that does not negate the fact that the switch has upset many a political quarters in Jordan and that by and large they might even have a legitimate reason to get upset.

The backdrop to the discontent is simple and clear: ex-deputies who had made it to Parliament under the benefits of the bloc-voting system in 1989 feel cheated out of victory in the Nov. 8, 1993 elections since the voting system has changed.

Other opposition to the changes to the Election Law has very little to do with indignation or pains over what is described as circumvention of constitutional provisions. They are worried about their reelection chances under the new system, particularly that many of them are aware that they did not exactly do an acceptable job of addressing the interests of their constituents in the four years they served in Parliament.

Exceptions are there of course. But then, those who can claim to be those exceptions have nothing to worry about. For them, Amman, Irbid, Zarqa, Maan, Karak or Aqaba means the same since they enjoy popularity throughout the Kingdom and in every constituency they have enough supporters to see them through the race.

In any event, from my vantage point, what I see on the Jordanian political scene are the teething troubles of a democracy, and one does not have to lose any real sleep worrying over what is the fate of democracy in Jordan. Quite simply, the tug-of-war and wrestling that we see today is part of the democracy we all aspire for.

THE WEEK IN PRINT

Amendment to Election Law—response to political developments in the country

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

The local press in the past week gave prominence to His Majesty King Hussein's meeting with the press and the change introduced to the Election Law, other domestic affairs and the general situation in the Middle East region.

In his meeting with the journalists at the Royal Court, the King stressed that the amendment to the Election Law was directed against no particular group, but came in response to present needs in light of the recent political developments in the country, said Al Dastour daily.

It was clear, said the paper, that the King is mainly concerned with the success of the democratic march and the success of the coming parliamentary elections which, he stressed, should be fair and free.

As always, the King has been frank and open in his talks with the Jordanian press, commenting on the recent amendment to the Election Law and underlining the need for all people to participate in the coming election, said Al Rai daily.

Stressing that the change in the law followed a wide-range dialogue, the King said he was keen on giving people equal rights to ensure free and fair elections and enhance the democratic process, said the paper.

By amending the Election Law, the King has plugged a constitutional loophole that plagued the existing law and has opened the way for equal opportunities for all voters, said Salameh Ekour, a columnist in Sawt Al Shaab.

The writer said that the amendment would undoubtedly contribute to a large extent towards helping the Jordanian citizens bring to Parliament the right persons to represent them in the coming four years.

A columnist in Sawt Al Shaab called on political parties to coordinate their steps and pool their efforts if they want to be represented in the coming Parliament.

The one-person, one-vote system is bound to weaken these parties' chance of reaching Parliament and, therefore, they have no alternative to merging or coordinating their plans and focusing attention on a selected number of persons of their choice, said Ahmad Dabbas.

A columnist in Al Dastour said that the amendment to the Election Law should have also included provisions ensuring the secrecy of the vote by the illiterate Jordanians.

Taher Udwai said that an illiterate person would of course need the help of one of

the committee in charge of the balloting centre who would either read aloud the person's choice or could fake it.

The writer suggested issuing voter cards with special signs or photos clearly indicating the candidates so that the illiterate people mark the picture or the sign and so ensure the secrecy of balloting.

The writer also suggested that the government interfere and put an end to practices by some rich candidates who normally resort to "bribing" with food, money to other means of tempting the voters to support them in the election.

Abdul Rahim Omar, a columnist in Al Rai, urged members of the public to turn out in strength at the coming elections which, he said, would be more fair than those of 1989.

Amendment to the Election Law was directed against no particular group, but came in response to present needs in light of the recent political developments in the country.

The writer said that the one-person, one-vote system is considered fair because under the previous system people in some constituencies were given a choice of six persons while in others they were given only two. He said the Jordanians are called on to enhance the process of democracy by participating in the coming parliamentary elections.

This view was countered by Mona Shqair, a columnist in Al Dastour, who said that the government was committing a grave blunder by introducing the amendment to the Election Law.

The writer said that it is wrong to introduce amendments to such a sensitive law without first conducting a comprehensive national dialogue.

She said that elements opposed to the Jordanian democracy are monitoring the developments and they would capitalise on this step as an anti-democratic move that benefits the regime alone.

A columnist in Al Rai said that the women in the Jordanian

society can be classified into two groups: The majority of working women or housewives who are really close to women problems, and a group of rich women who do not realise any of the sufferings of the first group.

Laila Humoud said that women voters should choose their women representatives in Parliament from among the first group and should be careful in their choice.

If they cannot do that, they should leave the matters to men to represent women and defend their causes, she demanded.

She said that it is natural for women not to agree on matters which are sometimes of common interest to them, but in this case they ought to pool their efforts and choose the right women if they are keen on protecting their own interests.

Saleh Al Qallab, a columnist in Al Dastour, criticised a system adopted by the Jordanian universities in which they have what they call "exception" lists of students who are given seats in various faculties without being subjected to the normal procedure of "preference for the average."

The writer said that many young men and women are frustrated every year as they watch others with lower grades allowed to enroll while they are rejected.

The writer said that the state universities would be doing a grave injustice to a large sector of young men and women and depriving them of a better future should they persist in such practice.

A columnist in Al Dastour called on the concerned authorities to give due attention to promoting public services in the capital, Amman, in the summer time.

For at least two months in the summer, Amman is overcrowded with people: expatriates returning for holidays or students coming for visits or to enroll at the colleges.

Khairi Mansour said that the presence of throngs of additional people in the capital tends to give it a new and busy life, but the capital is badly in need of recreational and other services to cope with this huge number of people and especially for the children.

A guest columnist in Al Dastour said that delay for more than two years in completing the Amman-Jerash-Irbid road has cost the country huge funds.

Abdul Raouf Tell said that the delay has forced travellers to follow other routes to reach their destinations, causing them more exhaustion and

wasting their time and money.

The writer said that despite the announcements on the part of the Ministry of Public Works that the otherwise project was nearing completion, the facts on the ground speak otherwise.

Referring to the stalled Middle East peace process, Mahmoud Rimawi, a columnist in Al Rai, said that the Israelis have succeeded, of course with American help and backing, to render the Arab-Israeli negotiations meaningless, though the whole peace process was based on the U.N. resolutions.

The writer said that the coming round of talks is bound to end in failure, like the previous rounds, since Israel is still pursuing its aggression and since Washington has not changed its attitude.

Referring to the upcoming Arab coordination meeting in Beirut, in preparation for the next round of Arab-Israeli negotiations, Al Dastour daily said that the meeting should see to it that the Arab countries are in agreement regarding a united stand to be taken at the coming meeting.

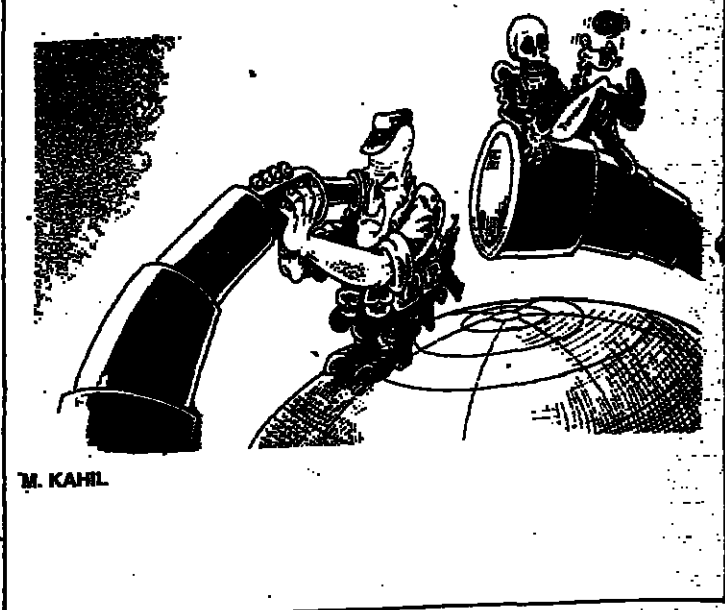
The Beirut parley could be decisive since it comes after a tour of the region by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher who has held consultations with the Arab ministers taking part in the coordination meeting, said the paper.

Projecting a pessimistic mood, Taher Al Udwai, a columnist in Al Dastour, said that the coming round of Arab-Israeli talks would not meet a better fate than any of the previous rounds. The various Arab parties involved in the negotiations are linking the progress of the negotiations to progress that should be achieved in the Israeli-Palestinian track, he said.

The writer said that as long as there is no progress on this track, due to Israel's intransigent stand, nothing can be achieved in the coming round.

Mahmoud Rimawi, a columnist in Al Rai, said that while arranging for the Arabs and the Israelis to hold more rounds of peace talks, the United States continues to plant mines in the path of peace by providing the means with which to help the Israelis build thousands of housing units for immigrants, especially in the Jerusalem area.

The writer said that the Jewish settlement programmes are continuing unabated and are backed by the United States, which is sponsoring the peace talks which supposedly are intended to end Israel's occupation of Arab land.



An Israeli link to bomb plots?

By Jane Hunter

A Mossad mole?

Sacramento Ca. — Reports a allegations that intelligence agencies infiltrated the social circles of Arab immigrants charged in the bombing of the World Trade Centre and an alleged conspiracy to blow up major structures in New York City continue to pile up.

If defendant Ibrahim Gabrouni is telling the truth, Emad Salem, a paid informant for the FBI, obtained forged Nicaraguan passports from an arms and documentation depot in Managua that, authorities say, was used by Latin American leftist organisations to carry out kidnappings.

The passports were allegedly to be used in springing Sayid Nosair from the New York prison where he is serving a sentence on charges linked to the 1990 assassination of Meir Kahane.

Mr. Gabrouni is Mr. Nosair's cousin. He was arrested in March when officials, searching for evidence in the trade centre case, found the passports. Mr. Gabrouni was to be tried on Aug. 2 for possession of forged documents and a showing match during the search. But last month, after he claimed Mr. Salem had asked him for photos of the Nosair family and his attorney William Kunstler subpoenaed Mr. Salem to testify about the passports, prosecutors indicted him in the case of 11 men arrested on June 24 and the days following on charges of plotting to blow up the U.N. building housing the FBI's New York headquarters and two tunnels connecting Manhattan and New Jersey.

"The minute I made this claim," Mr. Kunstler told Middle East International (MEI), prosecutors "pulled him into the great conspiracy case...so they can keep Salem on the stand in one case, not two. I knew I was on the right track when that happened." The defendants in the "great" case — they are mostly of Sudanese origin — claim that Mr. Salem instigated, organised and financed the bomb plots of which they are accused.

Lurid accounts in major U.S. newspapers have depicted the Nicaraguan source of the passports as a transnational centre of leftist terrorism. Mr. Salem's possible access to the facility suggests that it may have been infiltrated (perhaps even manipulated), if not by the FBI, which controlled the former Egyptian army colonel's infiltration of the circle of followers of Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, then by any one of a number of other intelligence agencies.

Last week, in a first-ever interview, Mr. Nosair claimed that Mr. Salem, who visited him in prison, told him he was involved with the CIA. Mr. Salem said he had access to the message centre at the U.S. embassy in Cairo and described a secret cryptography room in the building. Mr. Nosair recounted. He also said that "Emad said the CIA told him the KGB was behind the Kahane killing because to many Russian Jews were coming to the U.S." Mr. Nosair said. He also alleged that Mr. Salem, a former bodyguard for President Sadat, had once worked for Soviet intelligence.

Meanwhile, Kol Ha'ir, the Israeli weekly, reported that Ahmad Ajaj, a Palestinian awaiting trial in the World Trade Centre case, was a Mossad mole. The paper says that Mossad turned months for counterfeiting U.S. dollars. The New York weekly Kol Ha'ir's report, which repeated while Mr. Ajaj claims to have been arrested for infiltration activities, tortured and then in April 1991, deported to Jordan, the Palestine Human Rights Centre in East Jerusalem says his name is on no known list of deportees.

Mr. Ajaj travelled to Pesahwar, Pakistan and fought with the Mujahedeen in Afghanistan before arriving in New York last September on the same plane as Ramzi Ahmad Yousef, also charged in the trade centre case; last month the U.S. offered a \$2m reward for information on Mr. Yousef's whereabouts. Immigration authorities arrested Mr. Ajaj when he presented a phony passport; they freed him on probation pending appeal of a refugee claim on March 1, two days after the bombing, then jailed him again a week later. He was not charged with the bombing until May 6.

The indictment notes that he brought bomb-making manuals into the country. If Mr. Ajaj was still working for Mossad, says the Voice, it must be wondered whether the Israeli agency had advance warning of the attack.

Another Israeli report, in Hadashot claims that Israeli intelligence services had warned U.S. officials that Sudan had established a "terrorist infrastructure" in New York and was backing "terror squads" there. The Israelis passed on the information in March 1993, the paper said, following a Feb. 19 meeting of leaders of the "terror front" in Khartoum.

The purpose of the reports, which appear to be deliberate leaks blessed by the Israeli censor, baffled several experts. Israel might just be grandstanding, trying to insert elements of confusion into what has already become a veritable snarl, suggested one expert. Earlier reports of Israeli infiltration have been speculatively attributed to a desire to inflame U.S. opinion against radical Islamists. The allegations about Sudan came at the same time that a pro-Israeli magazine in the U.S. was reporting that two Sudanese diplomats at the U.N. were linked to the alleged second plot. Both are still at their posts.

Whether intended or not, the reports cannot but increase the pressure on the men facing trial, who are already coping with purported confessions purveyed by prison informants and rumours that one of their number has cut a deal with the prosecution. The authorities, said William Kunstler, may be trying to create a "stampede effect". Robert Precht, the attorney for Mohammad Salameh, who goes on trial in the trade centre case next month, said he hadn't heard of any defendant going over to the prosecution. "They certainly haven't made Salameh an offer and if they did, Salameh would reject it because he's ready to go to trial. He wants to vindicate his name," Mr. Precht told MEI.

The defendants must also worry about the effect on potential jurors of what Mr. Precht terms "anti-Islamic hysteria" churned out in press coverage of the cases. Last week U.S. District Judge Michael Mukasey, who is to try the second case, warned prosecutors to stop their leaks to the press — these have recently included such extravaganzas as reports that the defendants dealt in Pakistani opium — or he will query law enforcement officials under oath to find the leakers.

Meanwhile, administration efforts to put to rest charges that the CIA secretly sponsored Sheikh Abdul Rahman's multiple entries to the U.S. appear to have had dubious success at best. Officials have yet to deny a New York Times report that it was the CIA working under diplomatic cover in U.S. embassies that issued the cleric four of the seven visas for which he applied. The sheikh is now in detention facing a deportation order and an extradition request from Egypt — Middle East International.

The saviour falls from grace

By Shyam Bhatia

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM — On the day the Palestinian troika of Faisal Hussein, Hanan Ashrawi and Saeb Erakat threw down the gauntlet to Yasser Arafat, the popular West Bank magazine Al Bayader Al Siyasi shocked its readers with a 180-degree change in its editorial line.

Until six months ago the magazine, financed by the PLO and popularly referred to as "Arafat's poodle," regularly printed the Palestinian leader's pictures on its front page along with stories praising him as the saviour of the nation. No longer.

Palestinians are not surprised. The crisis between PLO headquarters in Tunis and Palestinian negotiators in the occupied territories has been building for months — signs first loomed after Arab Gulf countries abruptly cut off aid to the PLO after the Gulf war. Squeezed by its donors, the PLO, in turn, is squeezing its beneficiaries in the occupied territories, including tens of thousands of families who were supported by monthly grants or pensions.

The latest issue of Al Bayader was published after a six-month suspension due to lack of funds. It attacks Mr. Arafat, his organisation and policies that have "brought disaster" to the Palestinians. One article even blames the PLO for "fatal mistakes" that have caused the deaths of thousands of Palestinian refugees in neighbouring Jordan and Lebanon. It goes on to argue that the financial crisis of the PLO is the result of Mr. Arafat's hasty decision to side with Saddam Hussein in the Gulf war.

Another article calls for an end to "dictatorship and totalitarianism" in the PLO.

"It's time to stop lying," says the author, a well-known Palestinian academic from Arab East Jerusalem. The PLO-appointed head of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, Dr. Haidar Abdul Shafi, also calls for democratic reforms and an end to Mr. Arafat's one-man rule.

The reasons for the U-turn become very clear in the inside pages, where the editor is depicted with Mr. Arafat's enemies in Damascus, including Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam. The magazine editor, Jack Khazmo, has for a decade echoed the PLO's anti-Syrian views. Now he presides Syrian President Hafez Al Assad's "wise leadership," and his defence of Arab rights cut off all financial help to dozens of PLO-funded institutions, such as universities, newspapers and even health centres. The most recent casualty was the PLO's 20-year-old daily newspaper Al Fajr.

One of the newspaper's embittered editors, who still has a portrait of Mr. Arafat hanging

above his empty desk, said: "This is how Arafat compensates people who faithfully served him for 20 years. We have wasted our time and risked our lives to protect this man. Now look what he has done to us; 60 families have been thrown to the dogs."

Last week the managing editor, Ali Khalili, a prominent Palestinian poet and writer, suffered a massive heart attack after losing his job. He told well-wishers who called on him at Al Makassed hospital on the Mount of Olives that he blamed his illness on the PLO leader. "I haven't been able to find a decent job," he complained. "Who will feed my children? Perhaps it is time for me to seek a job with the Israeli media."

Some of his colleagues have had to accept fundamental professional changes. One, who has a master's degree from an Italian university, is selling ice cream on the streets of Nablus, the largest city in the West Bank. Another has hired himself out as a labourer on a construction site in Tel Aviv.

"Today I make 300 dinars a month (about £270) from working in an Israeli factory," explains Ghazi Bani Odch. "When I was a journalist, I was making 50 dinars. This change means I can start to live with dignity. I have realised you can no longer rely on the PLO, because now it is both financially and politically bankrupt."

The financial crisis is one of the reasons why members of the Palestinian delegation are furious with Mr. Arafat. Some of them have been obliged to give up a luxurious lifestyle that used to be paid for by the PLO. Among the accessories they have surrendered are private secretaries, chauffeurs and sleek, rented cars. One Jerusalem car rental company is still owed \$20,000 (£14,000), which it has lost all hope of recovering. Saeb Erakat, one of the delegates, says telephone, electricity and water bills for Orient House, the delegation's East Jerusalem headquarters, have not been paid for three months.

The cash shortage coincides with the absence of progress in the 21-month-old Middle East peace talks. Both events contribute to a growing sense of desperation, even anger, that is directed against the delegates. Stories of corruption have been circulating ever since the PLO was founded in 1964. Critics say the tens of millions of dollars have been pocketed by greedy local PLO representatives. This is a reference to the Amwal Sumud or "Money for Steadfastness", that is meant to help Palestinian families living under occupation. Such accusations are rarely extended beyond street gossip, because it would be difficult to substantiate them.

Yet there was never any doubt that money was an essential tool



Yasser Arafat — money was an essential tool in the chairman's strategy of sustaining popular support

in Mr. Arafat's strategy of sustaining popular support. Less than two months ago he personally authorised the expenditure of \$130,000 to win control of the Student Council in the West Bank university of Hebron, which had until then been under control of his fundamentalist rivals, the Islamic Hamas movement.

The university was shut down after Mr. Arafat's supporters burnt the university president's car and beat up Hamas loyalists. When the university reopened in time for the elections, it was revealed that outsiders masquerading as students had been drafted and paid to vote for the pro-PLO list.

Two years ago a New York-based Palestinian publisher, Paul Ajlouni, decided to break the taboo of never washing the PLO's dirty linen in public. In a series of front-page articles in the now defunct Al Fajr, he revealed details of opulent meals, first-class air travel and luxury villas that had become a way of life for the PLO's favourite sons living in Western Europe and the U.S. The decision to allow the articles to be published was meant to be a demonstration of the PLO's internal democracy, but they appeared only in the English-language edition, which does not circulate among the masses.

Last week's public dispute, the first of its kind involving local Palestinians challenging Mr. Arafat, erupted because delegates believe their status was being deliberately undermined by PLO headquarters. Unwilling to accept the role of mere messengers, the delegates demand the right to participate in the PLO's decision-making.

After the U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's recent visit to the region, the three senior members of the Palestinian delegation packed their suitcases for an unscheduled trip to Tunis. Before leaving, they leaked the news of their intended resignations to a local Arab newspaper, but refused to confirm or deny the story.

"This whole story about the resignations is all nonsense," says university professor Riad Al-Mal-

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Moldova hopes for a share of world wine market

By Janet Guttman Reuter

HINCHESTI, Moldova — The shiny new bottling equipment looks somewhat out of place behind the rusting gates of Hincesti's biggest wine-makers.

But the machinery, part of a 500,000 barter deal to market Moldovan wine in Europe and the United States, may be just the first step in reviving an almost stagnant industry.

It could give the former Soviet Republic, sandwiched between Romania and Ukraine, a chance to penetrate new markets with its reds and slightly sparkling dry white wines.

"We have stopped the fall in wine production and now we are looking forward to a revival," Gheorghe Cozub, head of viticulture at the Moldovan Agriculture Ministry told Reuters.

"I know there is a glut of wine in the West, but I am sure we can find a niche."

Nearly tended vineyards cover the hills around Hincesti, an agricultural town 40 kilometres from the Moldovan capital Kishinyov.

Wine plant Director Nicolae Sterbet said his company was delighted with the new equipment, supplied by Australia's penfolds wine group in exchange for promises of 600,000 litres of wine from the 1992 harvest.

"This is only the first tiny step," he said. "Cooperation is not going to stop here. It will continue and intensify."

Moldova, the second biggest wine producer in the former Soviet Union after largely Muslim Azerbaijan, is still trying to overcome the impact of a draconian anti-alcohol campaign launched by former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985.

Tens of thousands of hectares of vineyards were ripped up, and it takes years for replanted vineyards to yield fruit.

Mr. Cozub said Moldova's wine production was currently about 400 million litres a year, down from 600 or 700 million

litres in the pre-Gorbachev years. Vineyards currently cover 170,000 hectares of Moldova, although a government programme aims to increase this to 200,000 hectares by the year 2000.

Production is currently sold almost exclusively in the former Soviet Union.

Wine costs about 400 Moldovan roubles a bottle (30 cents) in Kishinyov shops. Moldovans drink it like Russians drink vodka, downing an average-sized glass in a single gulp.

"Our exports really were not big enough to count in the past," said Mr. Cozub. "But last year we exported 4.5 million bottles through a Dutch firm and this year we will sell another 3.5 million bottles abroad."

"We believe we can reach 20 or 25 million bottles or three or four per cent of production."

The barter deal with Penfolds will target customers in Britain and other European countries.

Penfolds Director Michael Paul said he was optimistic about export prospects for Moldovan wine.

But he cautioned that rapidly rising prices and a tumbling currency — consumer prices rose 269 per cent in the first half of 1993 — meant spending plans had to be revised frequently.

Moldova charged 25 roubles for a kilo (2.2 lb) of grapes last year and was talking about charging 250 roubles this year, although the lower rouble means it is hard to compare the two prices.

"Pricing is still the main problem," Mr. Paul said. "If we cannot agree a price for the grapes, then we cannot sell the wine. Obviously we are aware of the enormous impact Eastern Europe has already had, particularly in Britain, and we also realise Moldova can be a major source of wine."

But he said some investment was still needed to buy more equipment to make Moldovan wine acceptable to western markets.

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Yeltsin urges parliament to call early elections

MOSCOW (Agencies) — President Boris Yeltsin officially asked the Russian parliament Friday to call early general elections to resolve peacefully a power struggle between his government and the conservative-dominated legislature.

The standoff is still paralysing Russia, two years after a failed hardline coup against then-Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. Speaking more than four months after a referendum showed most voters backed Mr. Yeltsin and the pro-market reforms introduced since the collapse of the Soviet Union, he said deputies should now go before the voters as soon as possible.

In his message, a copy of which was received by AFP, Mr. Yeltsin called for "rapid" elections, without setting a date. However he has repeatedly said elections should be held in the autumn "whether parliament wants it or not."

Mr. Yeltsin told the Supreme Soviet, or legislature, that "parliamentary elections are a democratic and peaceful way out" of the political crisis.

He said current members of parliament were legally entitled to run for new terms.

The official call for elections marks the first stage of a "three-month action plan" mapped out by the presidential team to end systematic obstruction by the parliament led by Mr. Yeltsin's main political foe, Speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov.

Mr. Khasbulatov, who is working frantically for the political survival of a legislature that came out of the Communist era, last week rejected the idea of early elections.

Mr. Yeltsin knew there was little chance the parliament would agree to resign, but that it would have to act in accordance with the law if he asked for early elections.

"I understand that it is not easy to go before the voters ahead of the end of term but the results of the (April 25) referendum show that voters want this," Mr. Yeltsin told the Supreme Soviet with

a touch of irony.

The Russian president was implicitly stressing that he personally had had the courage to go to the voters in April, and won not only their support for him but their backing for the "process of social and economic reforms" of his government.

The only concession he made Friday to the legislature was that deputies should "discuss the details of organising these elections."

At stake was "the fate of Russia," he said.

"If we pay more attention to Russia's fate and less to our immediate personal interests, we must give the citizens of Russia a chance to form a credible leadership without further ado," Mr. Yeltsin added.

The Kremlin views the elections as a crucial step toward adopting a new constitution. The new parliament would be charged with passing the final text, which however would have no chance before the current legislature.

Russian parliamentary speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov meanwhile has told Attorney-General Valentin Stepankov to order the arrest of two top Yeltsin aides on charges of corruption, Interfax News Agency said.

The aides were identified as First Deputy Premier Vladimir Shumeiko and the head of the Federal Information Office Mikhail Poltoranin, a "former minister."

Quoting sources in parliament, the agency said Mr. Khasbulatov had put "strong pressure" on Mr. Stepankov at a meeting Thursday.

President Yeltsin marked the second anniversary of the failed Soviet coup Thursday by urging hard-pressed Russians to defend his reforms against "reactionary forces" who hope to turn back the clock.

The president promised better times ahead, but some 2,000 to 3,000 Communists and other anti-Yeltsin demonstrators used the occasion to condemn soaring prices, rising crime and the breakup of the Soviet Union.

The crowd gathered in the rain in front of the Russian parliament building defended by Mr. Yeltsin and his supporters on Aug. 19-21, 1991, when hardline Communists tried to oust Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Meanwhile, discontent is running so high in the Russian army that the army could turn into a separate political force, a Russian think-tank has warned, adding that troops are deserting in droves.

Poor conditions and loss of job prestige were "driving (the army) to become an autonomous political force," and increasing numbers of officers were attending political demonstrations, according to a report by the Institute for Social and Political Research published Thursday in Izvestia.

The institute is part of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Many officers no longer received salaries and had lost 70 per cent of their perks such as free housing and medical treatment, an article in Kommersant newspaper said.

Only 18,000 of the 62,000 new apartments due to have been built this year for the military had been constructed, at a time when many troops were returning from missions abroad, the institute said.

It also reported a "disturbing rise in criminality in the army, with up to 'three premeditated murders and 10 thefts of arms and ammunition' each day."

Suicides had also increased and accounted for one quarter of all deaths in the army, the report stressed.

"Each week 120 people desert," the institute said, adding that a conservative estimated.

Russian inherited much of the Red Army after the collapse of the Soviet Union and has been reorganising it and trimming staff.

The Defence Ministry hopes to eventually have an army of 1.5 million men — 10 per cent of the Russian population — compared with more than four million when the army was part of the old Soviet military.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Industrialist becomes Georgian premier

MOSCOW (R) — Parliament in the former Soviet Republic of Georgia approved industrialist Otar Patsatsia as the country's new prime minister Friday, journalists in the capital Tbilisi said. Mr. Patsatsia, a paper factory boss who previously headed the administration of the western town of Zugdidi, was approved by 124 votes to 17, with six abstentions, after being nominated by Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze. Georgia, war-torn and suffering a grave economic crisis, was left rudderless when Prime Minister Tengiz Sigua and his government resigned three weeks ago, since when Mr. Shevardnadze has acted as temporary prime minister.

72 die in China floods

PEKING (AFP) — At least 72 people have died in floods in the autonomous region of Inner Mongolia since mid-July, the Economic Daily said Friday. About 15,000 cattle have perished and more than 100,000 homes have been destroyed following torrential rain in the east off the region in northern China. The floods have caused damages estimated at around \$220 million and affected the livelihood of more than 50,000 people, the newspaper said. Floods throughout China this summer have already claimed at least 700 lives.

U.S. driver's beating trial begins

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Photos of a trucker being beaten at the start of the Los Angeles riots clearly show that one of the alleged attackers danced joyfully around the victim's bloody body, prosecutors said Thursday. Two black men, Damian Williams and Henry Watson, are being tried for attempted murder and other felonies. The focus of the case is their alleged beating of white trucker Reginald Denny in the opening hours of the riots April 29, 1992. In his opening arguments at the start of the racially charged trial, prosecutor Lawrence Morrison presented jurors with blow-up photographs of the bloody, videotaped beating which he said showed the two accused kicking and beating Denny. Mr. Williams buried the brick. Reginald Denny crumpled and Mr. Williams celebrated. He then danced with glee around Mr. Denny, joyfully cawing "over what he had done," Mr. Morrison said. The defence claim Mr. Williams, 20, and Mr. Watson, 28, are innocent and that police arrested the wrong men.

Rebels kill 55 Indians in Peru

LIMA (AP) — Maoist guerrillas hacked to death 55 native Indian villagers in the central jungle in the past three days, a government official said. Some 200 Shining Path rebels and Indians armed with machetes and spears swept into seven hamlets along the Ene River Valley, 250 miles (370 km) east of Lima, said Lucia Shinsato, head of the Andres Bello Caceres region. An army official reached by telephone in the jungle city of Saipo, 300 kilometres east of Lima, confirmed the attacks. He said they apparently were in revenge for the Indians' having helped the army track down guerrillas. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said army patrols were searching for the attackers.

Conservatives urged to stop drift

LONDON (R) — A leading right-wing Conservative politician opened old wounds in Britain's ruling party Friday with a fresh attack on Prime Minister John Major's leadership. Former cabinet minister Cecil Parkinson urged the government, deeply unpopular among voters and torn by rifts over Europe in the past year, to stop drifting and make painful cuts in public spending. Mr. Parkinson launched his attack, one of the sharpest yet from such a senior Conservative, in the magazine of the right-wing pressure group Conservative Way Forward, chaired by former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. He said the government had been undermined by a year of political upheavals and must put the past "terrible 12 months" behind it.

India launches offensive in Kashmir

NEW DELHI (AFP) — India's Border Security Force (BSF) has launched a major offensive in Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh in a bid to crush Muslim militant strongholds in the border regions of the two northern states. The Press Trust of India (PTI) said the BSF offensive aimed at preventing the guerrillas from shifting their operational bases from the Kashmir Valley to forests and towns elsewhere. The troops are concentrating mainly in Jammu, Kashmir's Hindu-dominated winter capital, and forests adjoining the city where the Muslim secessionists have reportedly moved in. PTI quoted BSF officials as saying: The drive follows stepped-up attacks on government installations on the state borders and last Saturday's killing of 16 Hindu bus passengers outside Jammu. The massacre was the first such reported incident in troubled Kashmir.

Angolan army pushes towards rebel HQ

LUANDA (R) — The Angolan government said Friday its forces were steadily advancing towards the UNITA rebel headquarters of Huambo and bombing strategic targets in the central highlands. "The FAA (Angolan Armed Forces) are pursuing their offensive in the direction of Huambo," spokesman Brigadier Jose Manuel "Jota" told reporters in the coastal city of Benguela. He added that the air force was continuing bomb raids, begun earlier this month, on UNITA military targets in the central highland provinces of Huambo and Bie. Gen. Jota gave no more details. Military sources said government troops, which have recaptured several towns between the Atlantic coast and Huambo, were carrying out clean-up operations around Ganda, about 110 kilometres west of Huambo city.

3 hurt in N. Ireland mortar attack

BELFAST (AFP) — At least three people were injured Friday in a mortar attack on the town courts in Newry, in the south of Northern Ireland, police said. One of the mortars, fired from a lorry, exploded close to the court building slightly injuring two policemen and a motorist, initial reports said. The lorry then drove away from the scene. The courts were repaired after being damaged by a recent bomb attack by the Irish Republican Army. In a separate incident overnight in the north of Belfast, three policemen had to be treated for shock after a mortar narrowly missed their patrol car.

Cambodia coalition gains as guerrillas flee rout

PHNOM PENH (Agencies) — long-time ally of the Khmer Rouge. Cambodian government forces have taken firm control of two Khmer Rouge base areas in the northwest and overrun some guerrilla positions in the centre of the country, the United Nations said Friday.

In Bangkok, Khmer Rouge leader Khieu Samphan shrugged off the Cambodian government's offer of surrender terms and called for an urgent meeting of the nation's leaders.

Hundreds of guerrillas and their followers fled two days of thunderous artillery fire in the northwestern province of Banteay Meanchey to seek refuge in Thailand, but were denied permission to cross the border, Thai and U.N. officials said.

The government says it has already disarmed 600 Khmer Rouge fighters and is offering surrender terms to the fugitives.

"We have told them that if they wish to surrender they should bring all their weapons and a white flag and we will take them to a refugee camp," General Pann Thay, vice chief of staff of the coalition government's unified army, told Reuters.

Asked by reporters for his response to Phnom Penh's surrender offer, Khieu Samphan said this week's fighting in northwestern Cambodia was "minor."

Government fighters took complete control of the village of Phum Chhat, where the Khmer Rouge had an important arms depot, just after dawn Friday, said Eric Falt, spokesman for the U.N. peacekeepers in Cambodia.

They also consolidated their advances in Ampil district further to the north, though pockets of resistance remained.

In the first 36 hours of fighting, coalition gunners fired over 600 mortar and artillery rounds at Phum Chhat, at one stage at a rate of 40 a minute, U.N. peacekeepers reported.

Mr. Falt said the attackers at Phum Chhat were mainly former fighters of the Khmer People's National Liberation Front, a

long-time ally of the Khmer Rouge.

This week's offensive is the first big action by the unified army formed after U.N.-run elections in May from fighters of the former Vietnamese-installed government, the KPNLF, and another former Khmer Rouge ally.

It comes in response to a widespread campaign of violence by the Khmer Rouge, murderous revolutionary rulers of Cambodia in the 1970s, who boycotted the elections but still demand representation in the new government.

Khieu Samphan, believed by Cambodia experts still to report to infamous revolutionary leader Pol Pot, repeated the Khmer Rouge request for a government role after meeting Thai Foreign Minister Prasong Soonsiri in Bangkok Friday.

Phnom Penh officials say it is too early for talks with the guerrilla group, whose inclusion in government could spell a stillbirth in Western reconstruction aid to Cambodia.

The government says the guerrillas must give up their zones and submit to the control of the unified army.

Meanwhile the government forces general who captured the Khmer Rouge's second headquarters in northwestern Cambodia said Friday he arrived in the town to find it completely evacuated of people and weapons.

"The Thais provided trucks to evacuate the people," General Khoun Roua, commander of Division 11 of the K. mer Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF) told AFP. "They took 400 soldiers and 1,000 people."

In Phnom Penh, a well-informed source who asked not to be identified confirmed the allegation.

"Not only were they not disarmed, as per the Cambodians' request, they were apparently trucked by the Thai military to Padin," he said, referring to the faction's primary headquarters in western Cambodia.

Armenia, Azerbaijan agree enforcing ceasefire is vital

MOSCOW (AFP) — The leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan have talked by telephone about enforcing the ceasefire undermined by continued clashes in the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, the Interfax News Agency said Friday.

Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosian and Acting Azerbaijani President Geidar Aliyev stressed during a telephone conversation late Thursday the vital importance of the ceasefire in the enclave, the agency said.

Signed Wednesday to cover an initial five-day period, the ceasefire was marred by fighting around the border region of Fizuli south of Nagorno-Karabakh and by what Azerbaijan described as the capture by Armenian separatists overnight

Wednesday of the Azerbaijani border town of Dzherrab.

Mr. Ter-Petrosian and Mr. Aliyev recognised the importance of establishing a dialogue between the separatists and Azerbaijani authorities and the need to further such contacts, the Armenian president's press service said.

The ceasefire was called by negotiators of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe meeting in Rome.

Earlier Thursday Iran seemed poised to end its neutrality in the conflict, strongly condemning Armenian "aggression" in the breakaway enclave, which is near its border, and calling for an "immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian forces from occupied Azeri territories."

Senator predicts end of U.S. Vietnam embargo

HANOI (R) — A senior U.S. senator predicted Friday that U.S. President Bill Clinton would lift the U.S. economic embargo against Vietnam by the end of this year.

"I believe that the embargo will be lifted sometime between the middle of September and the end of the year," Senator Charles Robb told reporters.

Sen. Robb, who carries political weight as chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, was the first senior U.S. visitor to Hanoi to predict a timeframe for an end to the embargo.

Vietnam, developing its Communist economy along market lines, is eager for the ban on trade and economic relations to be lifted, and U.S. companies want to do business here.

But Mr. Clinton is under pressure to maintain the sanctions from conservative Americans, and especially groups representing Vietnam war veterans and families of U.S. servicemen listed as missing in action (MIA).

Sen. Robb said all leaders of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) to whom he had talked and business interests in the region wanted to "move forward" on the issue.

Michael Jordan blasts coverage of father's death

RALEIGH, North Carolina (AP) — Michael Jordan thanked supporters for their sympathy following his father's slaying, and criticised some media speculation that the death might be linked with shady business deals or his own gambling.

"The many kind words and thoughtful prayers have lifted our spirits through difficult times," the professional basketball star said in a statement issued by his Washington lawyer, David Falk. "I also want to express my appreciation to the local, state and federal law enforcement officers for their efforts."

Jordan said he always believed that James Jordan's death was a random act of violence and rebuked news reports that it might be connected with family misdeeds.

"I was outraged when this speculation continued even after the arrests of the alleged murderers," Jordan said. "These totally unsubstantiated reports reflect a complete lack of sensitivity to basic human decency."

Authorities have charged two

18-year-olds from North Carolina, Larry Martin Demery and Daniel Andre Green, in James Jordan's death, saying the two planned to rob someone and Jordan stumbled into their path.

He was shot to death after stopping his Lexus on a state highway to rest early on July 23 during a trip to Charlotte.

When James Jordan was murdered, I lost my dad," Jordan said. "I also lost by best friend. I am trying to deal with the overwhelming feelings of loss and grief in a way that would make my dad proud."

"I simply cannot comprehend how others could intentionally pour salt in my open wound by insinuating that faults and mistakes in my life are in some way connected to my father's death."

Jordan said most news accounts have been fair. "Unfortunately, a few engaged in baseless speculation and sensationalism," he added.

Meanwhile an attorney for one of the men accused of killing Michael Jordan's father says he

has new information that shows the two suspects are innocent.

Hugh Rogers, the attorney representing 18-year-old Demery, said information he received Thursday suggests that someone else killed James Jordan, the Charlotte Observer reported Friday.

His client and Green "wandered upon a car with a body in it," Mr. Rogers said. He declined to give further details.

"There was pressure on law enforcement to solve this thing and solve it quick," Mr. Rogers said. "...Whether they were overzealous and arrested the wrong folks is something to be determined."

Mr. Rogers' statement was contradicted by Jim Coman, director of the State Bureau of Investigation.

"We've got the right people," Mr. Coman said. "...There's not any indication that anyone other than Demery and Green were actually involved in the shooting."

Authorities are performing bal-

istic tests on a .38 caliber handgun believed to be the murder weapon that could link the two suspects to the killing. Results of the tests are expected next week.

Thomas Lusby, the FBI's assistant agent in charge of North Carolina, said there is more evidence than just the gun to link Green and Demery to the shooting.

Authorities have charged Demery, of Rowland, North Carolina, and Green of Lumberton, North Carolina, with first-degree murder in James Jordan's death. Demery and Green could face the death penalty.

Mr. Rogers said he may ask that his client's trial be moved hundreds of miles (kilometres) away to western North Carolina, where potential jurors would have fewer ties to the Jordan family. Michael Jordan attended North Carolina coast.

"I'm looking at somewhere between Asheville and the Tennessee line," Mr. Rogers said Thursday.

Boy, 13, heads for Oxford University

LONDON (R) — A 13-year-old British boy is heading for Oxford University after passing his final school examinations in biology and chemistry with top grades. Adam Dent, who has been educated by his mother for the past four years, received the results from his A levels Thursday. The exams were straightforward. There was nothing too tricky, Dent told newspapers. Dent now has to wait for the result next week of a less strenuous examination in English to secure his place at the prestigious university, where he will study chemistry. A levels are normally taken by children leaving school at the age of 17 or 18.

Eastwood, companion have baby girl

SAN FRANCISCO (R) — A baby girl has been born to movie star Clint Eastwood and his actress companion Frances Fisher, a hospital spokeswoman said Thursday. The healthy baby was born at the Mercy Medical Centre in Redding, California, on Aug. 7 but the birth was kept secret until now to protect the couple's privacy, said Sharon Abersold, nursing supervisor at the Catholic hospital. Eastwood, 63, the tough hero in a string of cowboy and detective films, stars in the current hit movie in The Line of Fire. Eastwood and Fisher, who are not married, have made no secret of their romance or of the 41-year-old actress's pregnancy. They have called the girl Francesca Ruth Fisher Eastwood. Eastwood has two children, Kyle, 24, and Allison, 19, from his marriage to actress Maggie Johnson. They divorced.

The first crypt is going up in the eastern coastal town of Shenhui, where 60,000 graves have been dug up since 1988 to reclaim valuable farmland, Xinhua News Agency said Friday. The cemetery, a seven-story building in a garden setting, is part of a local campaign to break the peasants' age-old preference for burial, which has taken large amounts of farmland out of production. "The competition for space between the living and the dead has become acute," Shenhui town administrator Yan Chengnan said. For centuries Chinese peasants have buried their dead in elaborate and expensive rituals, using up scarce land and often leaving families deep in debt. Cremation and interment in the tower will cost about \$100. A traditional funeral can cost as much as \$25,000. Yet, ornate tombs dotting the landscape have become larger in recent years as farmers enriched by market reforms have poured their prosperity into their own posterity. The government officially favours cremation and has waged frequent campaigns against burial and fancy funerals.

PEKING (R) — A land-scarce Chinese town is offering peasants a low-cost way of getting a little closer to heaven — high-rise towers for their cremated remains.

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Land-scarce China builds high-rise crypts

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Teen-age girls have highest rate of gonorrhea in U.S.

ATLANTA (AP) — Teenage girls have the country's highest rate of gonorrhea infection — a startling 22 times higher than women 30 and older. And teenage boys aren't far behind, federal health officials reported Thursday. They warned that gonorrhea, which could signal possible AIDS infection, also could make teenagers more vulnerable to AIDS even if they haven't yet been exposed to that deadly disease. "We need people to say, 'what the heck is going on here,'" said Dr. Stuart Berman of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Gonorrhea is one of the nation's most prevalent sexually transmitted diseases. About 544,000 cases were diagnosed in 1991, a third of them in teenagers. It is curable but can cause infertility, heart and joint problems if not caught early. About half those infected with gonorrhea don't experience symptoms, which can include pain and discharge.

S. Africa reports record jewel theft

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — After months of futile searching, police have appealed for public help in solving what they call the biggest jewel theft in the country's history. Two antique gold necklaces valued at 4 million rand (\$1.18 million) were stolen from the owner's apartment in the seedy Hillbrow district in May, police warrant officer Andy Piek said Tuesday. The jewels, family heirlooms, date back to 1864 and were not insured, he said. "These two items of jewelry are believed to be the most expensive ever stolen in the history of South Africa," Officer Piek said.




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Sabatini upset again

TORONTO (Agencies) — Frenchwomen scored a couple of upsets in the \$750,000 Canadian Open Thursday when unseeded Julie Halard ousted third seed Gabriela Sabatini of Argentina and 12th seed Nathalie Tauziat beat fifth-seeded Czech Jana Novotna.

Halard beat Sabatini 6-4 4-6 7-6 (7-3) and Tauziat defeated Novotna 2-6 6-4 6-3.

With top-seeded Steffi Graf having the day off, second seed Arantxa Sanchez Vicario of Spain, fourth seed Mary Joe Fernandez of the United States and sixth-seeded American Jennifer Capriati all advanced to the quarter-finals.

The free-swinging 22-year-old Halard changed her tactics after not winning a set in four previous matches with the 23-year-old Argentine.

"I just had to do something different," said the 42nd-ranked Halard. "The last time I tried to hit hard on every ball and she liked that. So this time, I played some soft shots and then when I got an easy one, I'd go for it."

Halard controlled most points with bold shot-making as Sabatini played inconsistently and was unable to sustain a high standard of play and intensity.

The number six-ranked Argentine saved a match point trailing 4-5 in the third set, but was unable to surmount a 6-4 deficit in the tiebreak that ultimately decided the outcome of the two hour, 39 minute third-round match.

"I'm very up and down," said Halard, who ranked as high as number 18 in 1991. "It's all about what goes on my head, sometimes I just explode."

Halard will need to maintain her cool in the quarter-finals against Capriati, a convincing 6-0 6-2 winner over 11th-seeded Amanda Coetzer of South Africa. Capriati won their three previous meetings.

Tauziat attributed her victory over Novotna to a conscious effort she has made over the past few months to play more aggressively and go to the net.

Defending champ Sampras survives: In Indianapolis, defending two-time champion Pete Sampras survived a stiff challenge in beating Jonathan Stark 5-7, 7-6 (7-2), 6-3 Thursday in the third round of the U.S. Hardcourts.

The victory allowed Sampras to keep alive his battle with Jim Courier for the world's No. 1 ranking heading into the U.S. Open. Courier, ranked No. 2 and seeded second for the tournament at the Indianapolis Tennis Centre, defeating Tomas Carbonell off Spain 6-2, 6-1 in a third-round match.

Qualifier Jimmy Arias lost five match points before defeating No. 4 Goran Ivanisevic 3-6, 6-4, 6-4. Arias, ranked 244th in the world, lost three match points on his serve in the ninth game and then double faulted before losing the game. He won the first three points of the final game, lost the next two and got the victory when Ivanisevic, No. 10 in the latest tour rankings, double faulted for the 14th time.

"At triple match point, I choked so bad it was disgusting," said Arias, who finds himself in the quarterfinals of a tournament after not playing in since April. "My mind just lost it."

Sampras needed 2 hours, 17 minutes to get past Stark, who lost his serve only twice while saving seven break points. Stark was only able to get one break in the match.

Milan, Torino clash in Super Cup

WASHINGTON (AP) — At first glance, Milan should dominate Torino. But if there is a mismatch in Saturday's Italian Super Cup, it will be the other way around.

The Super Cup, the annual kickoff of the Italian soccer season, will pit the League champion red and black against Italian Cup winner Torino — and this year for the first time the event's six-year history is being held in the United States at Robert F. Kennedy (RFK) Stadium.

The match, being played at one of the nine World Cup venues, is part of the Italian federation's to generate some hype for next year's world championship while also luring potential sponsors.

It will match AC Milan, which rode a 58-match unbeaten streak to its second straight league crown last season, against Torino, which finished eighth in the league before beating AS Roma on away goals in the two-leg Italian Cup final.

While AC Milan's lineup includes some of the biggest names in soccer, many of them haven't made the trip to Washington or won't play for other reasons — Marco Van Basten, still recovering from ankle surgery; Jean-Pierre Papin, on assignment with the French national team; Gianluigi Lentini, recovered from an automobile accident but still unavailable; and Christian Panucci.

Torino, conversely, will have its best 11, including Uruguayans Enzo Francescoli and Carlos Aguilera, who have rejoined the team from Montevideo, where it played Brazil in World Cup qualifying Sunday a 1-1 draw.

Speaking through interpreters, both AC Milan head coach Fabio Capello and his Torino counterpart Emiliano Mondonico Thursday stressed the need for their squads to blend the talents of returning players with talented newcomers.

"We've been together enough to teach our new players our style of play," said Mondonico, whose team lost three Italian national team players during the offseason, but added three others from the Uruguayan national team.

"But we haven't been together long enough to make everyone comfortable with each other yet."

Similarly, despite only a pair of losses in the last two seasons, the inability to win the European Champions Cup has led to a shakeup at AC Milan — losing Frank Rijkaard to Ajax Amsterdam and Ruud Gullit to Sampdoria, and the squad also is coping with a rebuilding or sorts.

World Athletics Championships

Gunnell breaks world record in 400 hurdles

Ottey wins gold; Bubka claims 4th world title

STUTTGART (AP) — For Sally Gunnell, breaking the world record in the 400-metre hurdles was something special and unexpected. For Merlene Ottey, winning the gold medal in the women's 200 metres was the end of 13 years of frustration and three days of bitter controversy.

Gunnell, 27, of Britain, shattered the record by a remarkable two-tenths of a second with a time of 52.74 seconds at the World Championships Thursday night, edging Sandra Farmer-Patrick, who also went under the previous mark, clocking 52.79.

Ottey, 33, of Jamaica, the winner of eight individual bronze medals and two silvers in Olympic or World Championship competition since 1980, including a devastating second-place finish to Gail Devers in the 100 Monday night, outran Gwen Torrence in winning the 200 in 21.98.

The sizzling victories by Gunnell and Ottey overshadowed Sergei Bubka's fourth straight world pole vault title and near-miss at a world record: Kevin Young's second straight world title in the men's 400-metre hurdles, and Dan O'Brien's struggle to lead the decathlon.

"It was a dream come true," Gunnell said after smashing the world record of 52.94 set by Marina Stepanova of Russia in 1986 and becoming the first British woman to break a world record in six years.

At first, Gunnell was uncertain she had won after duelling brilliantly with the pacesetter Farmer-Patrick. She finally realised it when she saw it on the scoreboard at Gottlieb-Daimler Stadium, filled to capacity at 53,200 — and jumped in joy.

Farmer-Patrick collapsed onto the track after the momentous race in which she broke her American record of 53.37. She then was helped onto the medical area by two attendants, before a pep talk from coach Bob Kersee revived her from her mental grief and physical fatigue.

"He said, 'you just got beat and didn't give up like in the past,'" said Farmer-Patrick, who led from the outset until being overtaken just past the final hurdle by Gunnell. "When he told me, 'great job,' I got revived immediately. I was shocked he said that."

"He also told me, 'she's got to know now that she's got to break the world record to beat you again. I never thought of running that fast and losing.'"

Ottey was still convinced that she was robbed of a gold in the 100 after finishing in the same time as Devers. "How could they (officials) have the nerve to tell me I lost?" she said earlier in the week.

Her anger dissolved into joy Thursday night.

"I finally got it after 13 years of waiting... I have the gold medal," she said, after receiving a near two-minute ovation from the crowd while being presented with her coveted gold.

"I wanted to win it so badly that I ran the first 100 too fast and I was having problems the last 10 metres."

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She barely won it, holding off the arm-flailing Torrence, the Olympic champion, who finished second in 22.00.

"This is not revenge after the 100," Ottey said. "I came here to win the 100 and 200."

"I wanted to win this race so badly because I don't know if I'll ever be able to compete in the World Championships again."

Bubka, the only athlete to win four gold medals in the same event in the four World Championships, clinched the victory by clearing 19 feet, 8 1/4 inches (6.00 metres). He then had the bar raised to a world-record 20-1 3/4 (6.14), but missed three times.

He came close on his final attempt, brushing the bar on the way down.

Before his record attempts, he was involved in long, heated discussions with the officials over how much time he would have between jumps. Bubka insisted that since he was the only one left, he was entitled to six minutes, as written in the rules. The officials wanted to give him only two.

"It was a scandal," Bubka said.

pic or World Championship competition since 1980, including a devastating second-place finish to Gail Devers in the 100 Monday night, outran Gwen Torrence in winning the 200 in 21.98.

The sizzling victories by Gunnell and Ottey overshadowed Sergei Bubka's fourth straight world pole vault title and near-miss at a world record: Kevin Young's second straight world title in the men's 400-metre hurdles, and Dan O'Brien's struggle to lead the decathlon.

"It was a dream come true," Gunnell said after smashing the world record of 52.94 set by Marina Stepanova of Russia in 1986 and becoming the first British woman to break a world record in six years.

At first, Gunnell was uncertain she had won after duelling brilliantly with the pacesetter Farmer-Patrick. She finally realised it when she saw it on the scoreboard at Gottlieb-Daimler Stadium, filled to capacity at 53,200 — and jumped in joy.

Farmer-Patrick collapsed onto the track after the momentous race in which she broke her American record of 53.37. She then was helped onto the medical area by two attendants, before a pep talk from coach Bob Kersee revived her from her mental grief and physical fatigue.

"He said, 'you just got beat and didn't give up like in the past,'" said Farmer-Patrick, who led from the outset until being overtaken just past the final hurdle by Gunnell. "When he told me, 'great job,' I got revived immediately. I was shocked he said that."

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American Dan O'Brien leaves the starting blocks during the men's 100-metre sprint in the decathlon (AFP photo)

angrily, adding that the verbal bantering made him lose his concentration when he finally did jump — with six-minute breaks.

Younting, the world record-holder with a 46.78 clocking at last year's Olympics, ran the fastest time in the world this year, 47.18, in beating defending champion Samuel Matete of Zambia, runner-up in 47.60.

O'Brien, who set the world decathlon record of 8,891 points last year and won the 1991 world title, needed a personal-best 47.46 in the 400 metres, the day's last of five events, to finish with 4,598 points and a four-point margin over crowd favourite Paul Meier of Germany.

"The day was a bit rocky," said O'Brien, competing despite a troublesome groin injury. In the day's other final, Olga Burova of Russia won the women's discus at 222-1 (67.40 metres).

Meanwhile, Algeria's Noureddine Morceli, the world record-holder and defending champion in the 1,500 metres, made his celebrated debut in this year's championships and cruised to victory in his opening-round heat in 3:37.84.

Morceli had threatened to boycott the meet because of lack of prize money, but changed his mind and arrived Wednesday. He said he came because of the importance of the championships and insisted he had no problems with Primo Nebiolo, president of the International Amateur Athletic Federation.

Britain's Steve Cram, the world mile record-holder, finished behind Morceli in 3:38.98.

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GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAN HIRSCH ©1992 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

SNIP AWAY AT THE ENEMY

East-West vulnerable. South North's two-over-one response was a game force, and South's jump to four clubs was a splinter, showing club shortness. Blackwood revealed the fact that two aces were missing, and the result was a spade contract in no-man's-land—the five-level.

West led a low heart and the vast majority of players would reckon they could not lose more than a trick to the two black aces—and would quickly be defeated. After winning the heart they would immediately go after trumps. West would win, lead a club to partner's king and get a heart ruff for the setting trick.

While a heart ruff was distinctly against the odds, Chagas considered the possibility and took preventive measures. After winning the heart he immediately cashed three rounds of diamonds, discarding the club loser from hand. West was able to ruff the third diamond, but had no means of getting to partner for a heart ruff. The defenders still got the ace of spades, but that was their second and last trick.

In the trade, declarer's play is known as the Scissors Coup because it cuts the defenders' lines of communication. It's not difficult to execute; the secret lies in finding the right moment to apply it.

Opening lead: Four of — We have frequently remarked that the most successful bridge players are pessimists by nature. Follow Brazil's superstar Gabriel Chagas as he tackles a tricky five-spade contract against Canada at the 9th World Bridge Olympiad.

The bidding: South West North East 1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ 2 NT Pass 3 ♠ Pass 4 ♠ Pass 4 NT Pass 5 ♠ Pass

Plaza Adel Imam in Wad Sayyed Al Shaghal play (Arabic) Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30

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Libya said to have been given secret pledge on Pan Am trial

EDINBURGH (Agencies) — Secret guarantees have been given to Libya that two men accused of the 1988 bombing of a U.S. airliner would not be handed to the United States if they stood trial in Scotland, a British newspaper reported on Friday.

The Scotsman newspaper said a leading Scottish defence lawyer met representatives of Abdul Baset Ali Megrahi and Al Amin Khalifa Fhimah secretly in Brussels to discuss the possibility of giving legal advice to the suspects.

Britain and the United States hold the two Libyans responsible for a bomb that exploded on board a London to New York Pan Am flight over Lockerbie in December 1988, killing 270 people.

The newspaper said the talks were the first real sign that the accused were considering surrendering to arrest, warrants issued by Britain and America in November 1991.

It said that in addition to the secret pledge that they would not be handed over to Washington, Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi

had been assured a Libyan lawyer could join their defence team.

The Scotsman said advocate Lord Macaulay had gone to Brussels after being called in by leading criminal lawyer Alistair Duff. Mr. Macaulay, 59, is the opposition Labour Party's spokesman in the House of Lords on Scottish legal affairs.

In London, the Crown Office, part of the government's legal offices, declined to comment in detail on the report.

But a spokesman said: "The crown office was aware in advance that Lord Macaulay was travelling to Brussels and we were aware of the purpose of the meeting. It was a private meeting."

Libya has consistently refused to hand over the two alleged intelligence agents, despite the imposition of United Nations sanctions against Libya. The government says it will not stand in their way if they surrender voluntarily.

Tripoli has denied any role in the bombing and has said it would surrender the two Lockerbie suspects for trial in a neutral country

but not to the United States or Britain. The offer was rejected.

In a television interview screened in Scotland on Thursday, Colonel Qadhafi said neither war nor sanctions would make Libya hand the men over. But negotiations and understanding could lead to a solution.

"All the sanctions of the world or even of the universe they will never make Libya submit," Col. Qadhafi told a Scottish Television (STV) reporter in Tripoli earlier this week.

The Scotsman said elaborate precautions had been made to house the two accused in a Glasgow prison. Any trial would be held in the high court in Edinburgh or Glasgow.

Col. Qadhafi said that the restoration of diplomatic links with his country by London and Washington could speed the trial of the two men.

In his interview with Scottish Television, he said the renewal of ties would encourage the two suspects and "would give them more confidence to go" to one or other of the countries to stand trial.



EXHIBITION OPENED: Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali Friday opened at the Amman International Fair an exhibition of Jordanian industries (photo above) organised by a local firm in observance of His Majesty King Hussein's accession to the throne anniversary. The exhibition includes various Jordanian industries such as foodstuffs, electric appliances, construction material and other items. The Armed Forces are participating in the fair by displaying items depicting development achieved in manufacturing military equipment and spare parts (Petra photo)

Israel court orders Demjanjuk detained for another 15 days

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel's chief justice on Friday gave petitioners two weeks to present a final appeal to try John Demjanjuk on new war crimes charges.

The decision by supreme court justice Meir Shamgar gives the nine petitioners until Sept. 2 to convince the highest level of the court that it should look at the case again.

Mr. Demjanjuk, 73, was acquitted last month as the guard "Ivan the terrible" of the Treblinka camp. But the court found there was convincing evidence Mr. Demjanjuk belonged to a Nazi guard unit that helped kill Jews and served in other camps.

In all, eight high court justices and the attorney general have decided against a new trial, citing the danger of double jeopardy and saying legal proceedings against the retired Ohio auto worker have already dragged on for too long.

Petitioners must now find arguments they have not made before on why Mr. Demjanjuk should be put on trial again. Mr. Demjanjuk will remain jailed in his isolation cell in the meantime.

Mr. Demjanjuk's son, John Jr., said Friday he was disappointed and concerned for his father's well-being.

"It is difficult to imagine that he has to continue to suffer in a 12 foot by 10 foot, 100 degree prison cell. But that is the hand we have been dealt," he told reporters.

Noam Federman, a leader of the Ultra-rightist Kach movement that has threatened to kill Mr. Demjanjuk, said he was pleased.

"I'm happy for every day that Demjanjuk is suffering," Mr. Federman said outside the court. "Even if they agree to another trial he'll eventually get out and when he goes there will be someone to take care of him."

Mr. Demjanjuk was not in court.

"I decided to carry out the delay of the deportation order until the presentation of a request for a further hearing," Judge Shamgar said.

The ruling by Mr. Shamgar, who led the five-judge panel that acquitted Mr. Demjanjuk three weeks ago, gave groups seeking his prosecution for other alleged war crimes 15 days to prepare petitions.

Mr. Demjanjuk, backed by U.S. court ruling that he can return to his home in Cleveland, had planned to fly to the country that became his home after World War II.

Mr. Demjanjuk was stripped of U.S. citizenship in 1981 for lying about his alleged Nazi past and was extradited to Israel in 1986 to stand trial as "Ivan."

Earlier this month, a U.S. appeals court said Mr. Demjanjuk should be returned to the United States so he can make his case for trying to get back his citizenship. The U.S. Justice De-

partment has sought to block Mr. Demjanjuk from restoring his citizenship.

In New York, a group of Holocaust survivors filed a lawsuit Thursday seeking to block Mr. Demjanjuk's return. But U.S. District Judge Leonard B. Sand in Manhattan threw it out, saying he did not have jurisdiction to consider it.

The French association of the sons and daughters of deported French Jews on Friday laid charges against Mr. Demjanjuk for crimes against humanity, the association said.

The French association said "even if he was not the SS guard at the Treblinka camp, he was indisputably an SS guard at the Sobibor camp during World War II." It said the Israeli judicial authorities had not been able to try him for crimes committed at Sobibor because the extradition agreement reached with the United States concerned only the acts committed at Treblinka.

But the French judicial authorities would be competent to try him, the association said, nothing that four deportation convoys of French Jews were sent to Sobibor in March 1943.

The association's president is the famous "Nazi hunter" lawyer Serge Klarsfeld.

France Friday banned Mr. Demjanjuk from passing through Paris if he were released from detention in Israel and headed home to the United States.

U.N. seeks \$28m for Lebanon

GENEVA (R) — The United Nations launched an urgent appeal Friday for \$28.7 million to rebuild schools and homes in South Lebanon damaged by an Israeli blitz last month.

But a senior U.N. aid official announcing the appeal conceded that if bombings by pro-Iranian guerrillas continued to draw Israeli retaliation, it might be hard to convince donor countries to give money for immediate reconstruction.

Some 1,500 homes were totally destroyed and 16,000 damaged in late July by Israeli attacks to avenge the killing of its soldiers, according to the U.N. appeal document.

Robert Souria, who just returned to Geneva after heading a week-long U.N. inter-agency mission to devastated areas of South Lebanon and the west Bekaa Valley, told reporters:

"I strongly hope donor countries and the international community will respond positively to this appeal because it would be a gesture of solidarity for the stability of Lebanon."

Mr. Souria, chief of the relief coordination branch of the U.N. Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA), added: "I will admit that this appeal will be difficult because when you see what has happened today there

could be donor countries who say, 'why reconstruct now if there will be more attacks tomorrow?'"

"We have to continue raising funds no matter what circumstances might hit, such as those of today or yesterday," he added.

Hundreds of civilians fled South Lebanon Friday but most stayed put as fears subsided of a huge Israeli blitz to avenge the killing by pro-Iranian guerrillas of nine Israeli soldiers and wounding of three in two bomb attacks.

Israeli warplanes on Thursday bombed four Hizbollah targets in eastern Lebanon's Bekaa Valley in retaliation for the first attack.

Hizbollah warns against attacks

(Continued from page 1)

said they ruled out an Israeli response similar to the air, artillery and sea bombardments last month that killed 150 people and drove 300,000 from their homes.

But guerrillas and Lebanese troops were on high alert for what the sources expected to be a limited reply to Thursday's bombings which took the bloodiest toll among Israeli troops in Lebanon since 1985.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Thursday's bomb attack did not violate the ceasefire and the deaths would not affect Middle East peace talks, due to resume on Aug. 31.

"There would be no sense in going to Beirut or widening the security zone," Mr. Rabin told Israeli radio, ruling out any escalation unless guerrillas target Israeli civilians.

Deputy Defence Minister Motta Gur added: "Operation Accountability cannot be repeated every week." He was referring to last month's blitz.

Under the U.S.-brokered ceasefire, Lebanon and Syria pledged to stop the rocketing of northern Israel, which sparked the devastating operation.

Mr. Rabin said the ceasefire was holding and admitted that the bomb blasts Thursday were within the "rules" of the conflict in southern Lebanon.

"The Israeli army will have to adapt to how the Hizbollah fights," Mr. Rabin said.

"I am sorry the Hizbollah beat us yesterday. We will have to

adapt to its way of fighting and minimise our losses. But we cannot prevent casualties."

"Israel will not tolerate attacks on communities in the north," Mr. Rabin warned.

The operation (accountability) was aimed at preventing the war of attrition the army faces in Lebanon from spreading to our civilians," Mr. Rabin said. "So far that aim has been achieved."

He also rejected a right-wing opposition call to halt peace negotiations with Syria.

"It is true that Syria allows the Hizbollah to receive arms from Iran and has certainly not encouraged the Lebanese government to deploy forces in the south, but breaking off the negotiations with Damascus would serve no purpose."

In Baalbek, a Hizbollah official threatened U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali for having sent condolences to families of Israeli soldiers killed in guerrilla attacks.

"The day will come when Boutros Ghali, who sheds tears today for the aggressors, will see his blood spilled as well as that of his collaborators who plot against our resistance," Sheikh Mohammad Yazbek said.

In Oslo, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres vowed revenge for the deaths of nine Israeli soldiers and called Iran the biggest trouble maker in the Middle East.

Mr. Peres, in Oslo as part of a tour of Scandinavia, said Israel would continue regional peace talks despite Thursday's deaths in

bomb blasts.

"We shall fight terrorism because we have to provide security for all peoples, not only Israelis. We shall fight for peace because peace is the ultimate solution," he said.

"Today the greatest trouble maker in the Middle East is Iran," Mr. Peres told a news conference after talks with Norwegian government leaders. "They provide money and support."

"We hope that the villages (in South Lebanon) will not provide protection to the Hizbollah and I think many of the villages understand now that this is our position," Mr. Peres said.

France urged Israel not to get caught up in a spiral of violence, while blaming Hizbollah for jeopardising the peace process.

While holding the guerrilla group responsible for Thursday's attacks, France called on all states with influence in the region to "use it to encourage everyone to show restraint."

"If they won't be hideaways for the Hizbollah they will not suffer anything. But if they bring in the Hizbollah people we don't have a choice but to chase them where they are," he said.

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Khartoum scoffs at 'terrorism' charges

KHARTOUM (Agencies) — Sudan has denounced U.S. charges that it exports "terrorism" and vowed to continue national mobilisation and "go forward on the avenue of Jihad."

Government newspaper Friday published defiant remarks by Interior Minister Brigadier Abdul Raheem Hussein and a statement by the Foreign Ministry saying Washington presented no evidence for its charges.

Brig. Hussein told female cadets graduating Thursday from a Home Defence Force training camp: "A nation whose women carry the Kalashnikov will never be subjugated or humiliated."

Every able-bodied Sudanese is supposed to undergo training for the Home Defence Force militia, a key element of the ruling military junta's Islamisation programme. Many Western experts contend that foreign Islamic extremists, especially Iranians, conduct some of the training, with Egyptian, Algerian, Palestinian and other foreigners among the cadres.

The armed forces newspaper Al Nasr reported the speech to the women militia graduates by Brig. Hussein, Sudan's top security officer, who doubles as the junta's secretary-general.

"We will continue to militarise every Sudanese citizen," he said. "Sudan will go forward on the avenue of Jihad, carrying arms for the defence of the beliefs and the nation."

The United States said Wednesday it was adding Sudan to its list of states sponsoring international terrorism because the country harbours foreign "terrorists."

The junta leader, Lieutenant General Omar Hassan Al Bashir, denied the allegation and attacked the decision as "politically biased and lacking in evidence and logic."

On Friday, newspapers reported a Foreign Ministry statement denouncing the U.S. action.

The ministry denied that Sudan hosts "terrorist" organisations and said not a single "terrorist" act has been launched from Sudan. Egypt, Sudan's northern neighbour, claims evidence that Muslim extremists active in that country were trained in Sudan.

The Sudanese statement said arguments the Americans gave for listing Sudan were so weak that the Sudanese government "believes that the main and real reason behind it was that the Sudan's civilised Islamic orientation was not acceptable to the U.S. administration."

Evidence given was far too unsubstantial for "such a grave decision," the statement said. The listing means Khartoum is ineligible for U.S. aid except humanitarian relief, this year totalling \$71 million.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher ordered Sudan be put on the list after a six-month inquiry showed the Sudanese government allowed "terrorist" groups to operate on its territory, State Department spokesman Michael McCurry said Wednesday.

The cumulative weight of the evidence establishes that Sudan is providing repeated support for international terrorism," Mr. McCurry said.

Mr. Peres said.

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Column

Marseille hospital gets princely gift

MARSEILLE (AFP) — Saudi Prince Walid Al Waleed Ibn Talal bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud gave 5 million francs (\$833,000) to a hospital here which successfully operated on his son, public welfare authorities said. The prince's 15-year-old son suffered a broken skull in a jet-ski accident Tuesday near the French Riviera resort of Saint Tropez. He was rushed to the Timone Hospital where doctors performed the operation. The grateful father wants his gift to be spent on renovations, officials said.

Clinton tries to resist workaholic tendencies

MARTHA'S VINEYARD, Massachusetts (R) — U.S. President Bill Clinton is vowing to put the drudgery of work aside for the next 10 days and just relax and enjoy this exclusive New England resort island. And this time the normally work-prone leader seems to mean it.

Mr. Clinton, who celebrated his 47th birthday with family and friends at a dinner party hosted by Washington lawyer Vernon Jordan shortly after his arrival Thursday, expressed mock horror when an aide remarked he had brought some paperwork along. "Burn it!" he jokingly commanded. He scheduled a round of golf at the Farm Neck Golf Club Friday and planned to read a few books during his stay here. They included a new biography of Thomas Jefferson given to him as a birthday present by Vice-President Al Gore and a thriller by Robert Ludlum. The president is staying with his wife Hillary and their daughter Chelsea at the secluded oceanfront home of Robert McNamara, defence secretary under presidents John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson.

Chiang Kai-Shek's grandson travels to China

TAIPEI (R) — A grandson of Taiwan's late Nationalist leader Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek left for China Friday, becoming the first member of the Chiang family to return there in over four decades. Winston Chang, 51, president of Taiwan's private Soochow University, led a delegation of about 60 judicial officials and lawyers to Peking to attend a law seminar, which begins on Aug. 23. He will then travel to Guilin in China's southern Guangxi province to sweep his mother's grave. Tomb-sweeping is a Chinese tradition in which people offer sacrifices to appease the souls of dead family members. Chang, who bears his mother's surname, was born in China before Chiang Kai-Shek's Nationalist government lost the Chinese civil war and fled to Taiwan in 1949. Chang told reporters Friday that his trip had the blessing of Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui and political obstacles had been removed.

Advocates for mentally ill upset at Perot

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — Presidential aspirant Ross Perot was criticised by an advocacy group that claimed his use of Patsy Cline's "Crazy" as a theme song at political rallies was insensitive to the mentally ill. The Alliance for the Mentally Ill of New York State is also angry about Texas billionaire's frequent likening of the federal deficit to "a crazy aunt we keep down in the basement." "We would like an apology — an acknowledgement that he is, in a sense, very politically incorrect by saying what he is saying," said Glen Lieberman, spokesman for the alliance. He said the group represents thousands of family members of mentally ill New Yorkers. Mr. Perot, who will be in New York state this weekend, was quick to respond with an apology.

Noriega can stay in prison suite

MIAMI (AP) — Manuel Noriega can spend his 40-year cocaine-trafficking sentence in the relative luxury of his Miami prison suite, the Federal Bureau of Prisons ruled. With the decision, the former Panamanian ruler, ousted in a December 1989 U.S. invasion, avoids the tough, maximum-security prison in Marion, Ill., where prosecutors had sought the right to place him.

"Obviously, Manuel Noriega has special needs, and we feel that his placement in the area that he's in is appropriate," said prison spokesman Greg Bogdan. Defence attorneys were notified in a letter mailed Tuesday, said lead prosecutor Michael Sullivan. "He can stay in the same (cell) he's been in," Mr. Sullivan said.

Mahmoud Darwish resigns from PLO's Executive Committee

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Mahmoud Darwish, a highly respected figure considered by many as a symbol of Palestinian culture, has resigned from the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Executive Committee in what Palestinian sources here describe as an unsurprising move.

Mr. Darwish, a renowned poet who has written several books and has been honoured with international awards for his outstanding literature, submitted his resignation last week to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and refused to withdraw it, reports from Tunis said.

Mr. Darwish, who joined the PLO Executive Committee in 1987 after Mr. Arafat managed to bring in most mainstream factions under his leadership following a period of serious dissent, had been indicating for several months that he was planning to quit the panel, the sources said.

"Mr. Darwish did not want anything to do with the inter-Palestinian politics and struggle, and wanted to rise above everything and simply confine himself to his literary work," said a source who knows the poet very well.

Mr. Darwish, who left the West Bank after Israel occupied the area in the 1967 war, was seeking to be named the Palestinian representative to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), but Mr. Arafat wanted him to remain in the PLO Executive Committee, said the source.

Other sources said Mr. Arafat

fat obviously thought that having such a respected figure as Mr. Darwish, who served as head of the influential General Federation of Palestinian Writers and Journalists, was strengthening the mainstream leadership of the PLO.

In comments carried in reports from Tunis Friday, Mr. Darwish was quoted as saying that he was going "to give all my time to my intellectual work."

The sources in Amman said Mr. Darwish was upset with the course of Palestinian decision-making and felt that he could not maintain a figurehead leadership position amid indications that the PLO was making concessions after concessions to the Israelis in the 21-month-old Middle East peace process.

"Mr. Darwish did not want to be part of an agreement which does not explicitly provide for Israeli withdrawal from all occupied territories," said a PLO source here.

Mr. Darwish opposed the peace process under the present terms of reference and framework imposed by the U.S. and Israel, but hoped that as things went along the Palestinians would be able to wrench a better deal, said the source.

"But when it became clear by the eighth round (of bilateral talks) that the Israelis and Americans were calling the shots, and the Palestinians were coming under increased pressure to tow the line, he wanted to resign," added the source.

Another independent PLO executive said in Amman last

month that decisions related to the peace process were limited to a selected group of executive Committee members and close Arafat advisers who wanted to continue the peace talks with Israel regardless of the odds.

Sheikh Abdul Hamid Sayeh, speaker of the Palestine National Council (PNC), resigned three months ago, also in protest against the course of the peace process.

Palestinian negotiators were also disappointed with what they saw as behind-the-scenes moves by the PLO without consulting them. Three top negotiators submitted their resignations last month, but retracted it under a compromise which meant they would be closely consulted before the PLO makes any moves in the peace process.

Mr. Darwish is credited with arranging contacts between PLO officials and leftist Israeli politicians, notably the Meretz bloc which is now part of the ruling coalition in the Jewish state.

Mertez leader Shulamit Aloni confirmed last week that she had met with Mr. Darwish after he became a member of the PLO Executive Committee.

Another reason behind Mr. Darwish's resignation, according to a Reuters report from Tunis, was financial management of the PLO. But the sources here doubted whether that figured high in Mr. Darwish's reasons to quit, "given his aversion to getting involved in such issues," as one of the sources put it.

Muta plot trial to start soon

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The trial of 10 people accused of plotting an attack against His Majesty King Hussein will open at the State Security Court early next month but two leaders of an illegal group now under detention are not expected to be charged in the case, informed sources said.

The sources said unexplained last-minute snags had delayed the trial, which was supposed to have started this week.

The sources, who spoke to the Jordan Times on condition of anonymity, said the security forces were seeking two suspects who were still at large and were giving them an ultimatum to give themselves up immediately.

The sources did not say how the ultimatum was being served.

The sources identified the two as Walid Shahin and Youssef Isbatan and said the two were suspected of being leading members of the Islamic Liberation (Tabhir) Party (ILP).

Those already in detention include two other members of the party, Ismail Al Wibah and Hilal Al Shamout, and six students from the military wing of Muta University.

"The trial will start next month, and if the two at large remain missing, they will be tried in absentia along with the other eight," said a senior source.

According to the source, ILP spokesman Ata Abu Rish-

teh and activist Bakr Khawaldeh, who were arrested in May, did not appear to be linked with the Muta plot, which involved an assassination attempt against King Hussein during a graduation ceremony in June.

"As far as evidence indicates, the two are not being detained in connection with the plot," said the source.

The comment indicated that Mr. Abu Rishteh and Mr. Khawaldeh could have been detained for undertaking political activities without obtaining legalisation of the group.

The ILP, which maintains a defiant posture towards all existing Arab governments, has not applied for registration with the government under the political parties law enacted in 1992.

In a statement given to the Associated Press early this week, the ILP denied any involvement in the Muta plot and said it had no links whatsoever with the students detained. The group did not say whether the two others in detention belonged to the party.

Another member of the ILP, Ibrahim Judeh, was arrested two weeks ago, but it was not immediately known whether he was suspected of involvement in the Muta plot.

An official spokesman last week confirmed the arrests and the discovery of the plot. Reporting on the affair so far has been restricted since investigations were continuing.

According to Jordanian press laws, cases under investigation are not supposed to be reported. But when trials start,

there are no restrictions to reporting the actual proceedings in court.

More than 30 people were initially rounded up for questioning in connection with the Muta plot in April. All except the eight suspects have been released since then.

Families of the suspects held a press conference last week to maintain the innocence of the detainees and appeal to the King to intervene and ensure that "justice is carried out."

They alleged that the suspects were tortured while undergoing questioning.

The suspects were moved to a military prison in Zarqa earlier this month, and some of the family members were allowed to visit them.

The ILP was founded in the West Bank in 1951. Its founder, Taqiddene Noubani, later set up a Jordan branch. It was outlawed when political parties were banned in the Kingdom in 1957.

The group does not recognise any Arab regimes and seeks the establishment of caliphate-style governments through coups d'etat. Its record shows that it does not believe in passive or violent resistance to regimes, but seeks the help of influential community leaders and the military to topple governments.

The ILP is not part of the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories apparently because it does not believe that such resistance will serve its purpose of creating a caliphate-style, rather than a nationalist, state.